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The Deconstruction of Death
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The Praetorian Guard
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Nasty Little Wars
Anatol Lieven

Crossing the Colombian Threshold
Brian Jenkins

Essays & Comments:
John Lukacs, Andrew Marshall, Kenneth Minogue,
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EDITORIAL OFFICE
1112 Sixteenth Street NW, Suite 540, Washington, DC 20036
Telephone (202) 467-4884 Fax (202) 467-0006
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THE NATIONAL INTEREST NUMBER 62, WINTER 2000/01

Articles

5 **Where Does Russia Belong?** *by Stephen Sestanovich*
In the last issue, Zbigniew Brzezinski proposed a new plan for including Russia in an expanding transatlantic community. But his ideal world might not come about. *With a comment from Brzezinski.*

17 **China: Getting the Questions Right** *by Richard K. Betts and Thomas J. Christensen*
The usual questions about the China threat are increasingly unproductive. The authors suggest some new ones of their own.

31 **American Sovereignty and the UN** *by Jesse Helms*
The UN aspires to impose its moral authority on the United States in the name of international justice. The American people will not buy it.

35 **The Rocky Shoals of International Law** *by David B. Rivkin, Jr., and Lee A. Casey*
International law is rapidly evolving in a direction that threatens American sovereignty. With careful attention, however, the United States can mold the law to its advantage.

47 **Colombia: Crossing a Dangerous Threshold** *by Brian Michael Jenkins*
America may indeed have a strategic interest in aiding Colombia. But it should not do so without a clear-eyed assessment of a complex situation.

57 **The Praetorian Guard** *by William Pfaff*
The real civil-military gap is between the U.S. military's excessive influence and common sense.

65 **Nasty Little Wars** *by Anatol Lieven*
Ask the Chechen fighters—the future of war is nasty, brutish and anything but short.

77 **Human Nature and Human Rights** *by Robin Fox*
"Human rights" as understood today bear little relation to what it means to be human; but that does not faze their advocates.

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87 **The Deconstruction of Death** *by Fred Charles Iklé*
Most public fears about the "genome era" have been overly alarmist. Yet the political consequences may prove to be revolutionary.

97 **German Fictions** *Jan-Werner Mueller, James W. Davis, Stefan Sullivan*
An exchange on Jacob Heilbrunn's recent portrait of Germany's new literary Right.

Books

103 **The Real Synthesis** *by John Lukacs*
A "new history" of the Third Reich fails to understand the true nature of the regime.

107 **Holding the Bridge** *by Andrew W. Marshall*
A portrait of a dedicated senator and a steadfast cold warrior.

110 **Hyphenating Foreign Policy** *by James Schlesinger*
The new game of ethnic politics in foreign policy is a curious development—no less for American leaders' support of it.

114 **Subverting Cant** *by John O'Sullivan*
An Irishman of indefatigable mind and rare sensibilities.

119 **The Vanity of Reason** *by Kenneth Minogue*
A look at reason's self-destructive side, and an example of the same thing.

Correspondence

123 Anatol Lieven, Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis, Aristotle Tziampiris, Jonathan Clarke, Charles Singer, William Lembesis, Unal Basusta, Tom Donnelly, Deborah Avant, Efraim Karsh, Ivo Daalder and Michael O'Hanlon, Stefan Herpel

Quarterly

131 **Jumping to Confusions** *by Adam Garfinkle*
The fall of Milosevic does not vindicate U.S. Balkans policy, and the violence in Israel does not prove that Oslo was doomed to fail.

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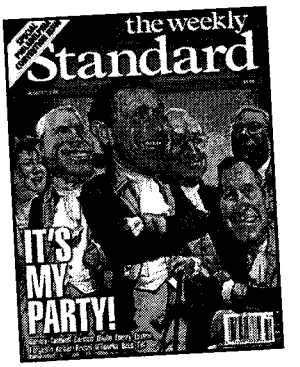

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Where Does Russia Belong?

Stephen Sestanovich

OVER THE PAST half decade, our debate about Russia—and, for that matter, Russia's debate about us—has been episodic but always excitable. The issue or problem dominating the news at any given moment has been seen again and again as *the* test likely to determine the overall success of the post-Soviet transformation. Handled poorly, the problem of the day seemed likely to stunt Russia's evolution and poison our relations for years to come—or at least until the next make-or-break issue came along.

These would-be defining moments have included Russia's acute financial crisis in the summer of 1998 (remembered in one recent study as "the total collapse of the Russian economy"). It was followed by the Bank of New York money laundering scandal in the summer of 1999, which turned Russian corruption into headline news for weeks on end; by Moscow's grisly grudge match against the Chechens in the fall and winter of 1999–2000; and, this past summer, by Vladimir Putin's (slightly) less relentless campaign to bring independent television under government control.

Foreign policy confrontations have also generated predictions of lasting U.S.-Russia estrangement. (I know: I made some of them.) NATO enlargement was perhaps the first disagreement of this magnitude, but subsequent ones have produced even more dire predictions. Was it not obvious that relations between Washington and Moscow would never recover, and that the START II Treaty would never be ratified, after the war in Kosovo in 1999? When they did begin to improve, of course, it then became obvious that the real threat to good relations, the one from which they would never *ever* recover, was American deployment of a limited national missile defense.

These seeming watersheds have revealed genuine, and sometimes massive, problems in Russia's internal development and its relations with the West. If none has turned out to have the enduring significance widely predicted for it, their cumulative impact has nevertheless been very great. They have left behind diminished confidence about where Russia and U.S.-Russia relations are heading, and about what kind of relationship might be constructed in the future.

Measured against these lowered expectations, two recent stock-takings of U.S.-Russia relations—Zbigniew Brzezinski's article, "Living With Russia", in the Fall 2000 issue of *The National Interest*, and the report of a House Republican group chaired by Representative Chris Cox, entitled *Russia's Road to Corruption*—seem

Stephen Sestanovich has served since 1997 as ambassador-at-large and special adviser to the secretary of state for the New Independent States. These are his own views.

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strikingly hopeful. Brzezinski counsels a policy of "patience and strategic persistence" and concentrates on the question of how over time Russia might be accepted into NATO and the European Union. As for the Cox report, it lambastes the Clinton administration's policy, but not (as might have been expected) for failing to see that Russia is our enemy. The bottom line of the critique is instead that U.S. policy has failed to tap the immense potential of Russian-American partnership.

Both of these evaluations start with the assumptions that Russia belongs in the West, and that—for all the difficulties that stand in our way—the West has a major interest in anchoring it there. In the very first sentence of his article, in which he endorses "the progressive inclusion of Russia in the expanding transatlantic community", Brzezinski takes as his own the goal that has guided policy toward Russia throughout the Clinton administration. He is not happy with the administration's means of pursuing this goal, labeling it a "one-sided courtship" that has failed to recognize Russia's lack of commitment to the same result and its continuing aim to regain control over the other former Soviet states. Yet the debate he joins is about *how* to promote Russia's integration into the West, not about the goal itself.

Integration is indeed the goal that encapsulates all others, and precisely because it can so easily be forgotten in the daily controversies over more sensational sounding policy problems, it is useful to look carefully at what has, and has not, been accomplished in the past decade, and at what we—and the Russians—can realistically aspire to in the next. For Brzezinski, the right U.S. policy will be one that offers Russia a place in Western institutions but makes full repudiation of empire "Russia's only viable option." His is a grand design, with no loose ends, and it has to answer the objections put to all such large conceptions. Is it a realistic assessment of the world we face, and does it correctly identify the problems we want to solve? Does it reflect what we have learned from other efforts to effect such a vast transformation? Does it help us understand the trade-offs that will be necessary if we have to settle for second-best?

Lousy Joiners

THE GOAL of integrating Russia into the West is not a new one. Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, even before the fall of the Berlin Wall, Bush administration officials used the term "integration" to describe their hopes for the next, post-Cold War phase of East-West relations. Beyond the political, economic, military, even psychological dimensions of this process, Western policy paid special attention to the institutional side of it—to the "club memberships" that would give countries that had been kept out of the global mainstream a place in Western institutions. Their participation was expected to give them a stake in a more regularized, consensual, rules-based international order. The prestige of membership would confirm that they had not been permanently relegated to second-class status by decades of communism. For Russia it would show that defeat in the Cold War was not a setback but a new opportunity. Most important, the practical benefits of drawing steadily closer to Western institutions would create continuing incentives for governments and societies to reshape themselves—their economies, their military establishments, their international conduct, their way of thinking.

Although this acculturation strategy was fashioned above all for European states isolated by the Cold War, its basic logic—accept certain norms of behavior, receive a seat at the table—has been embraced by others as well. Both China

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and Turkey have lately made winning a major new "club membership"—in China's case, accession to the WTO; in Turkey's, to the EU—not only the centerpiece of their foreign policies but the principal measure of their international success.

Russia has also gained access to new groupings, but largely where entry has been offered unconditionally, as a political gesture or sign of respect. It was in this spirit that in 1991 Gorbachev was invited to join the members of the G-7 in London for part of their annual meeting. Although Yeltsin and, after him, Putin have gradually been granted something close to full membership, their role has still had largely symbolic significance.[1] Because the G-8 lacks a membership process, Russia gained entry without having to meet the demanding performance criteria of other institutions. The same was true of its accession to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the annual gathering of the leaders of the Pacific Rim states. Russia joined this particular club on the strength of an emphatic nominating speech by President Clinton at the 1997 meeting—and because other members were willing to go along. But because APEC is, like the G-8, less an organization than an annual meeting, it demands (and imparts) little in the way of organizational culture.[2]

Russia's largely decorative participation in the G-8 and elsewhere tells us little about its overall commitment to integration. Over the next several years, the process of integration will be defined less by political gestures and more by how well Russia's actions match the purposes of groupings—like NATO or the WTO—that have higher aspirations, a more focused mission, and more rigid membership criteria. Here Russia's record as a joiner looks far poorer.

NATO is of course the most problematic case, since neither side has wanted to address the issue of membership as such; Russia was spurred to develop a new association with the Atlantic Alliance by the fact that others wanted to become members. Enlargement was Russia's most complicated foreign policy problem since the collapse of the USSR, and neither passive acquiescence nor ultra-ferocious opposition, much less retaliation, would have been an effective strategy for dealing with it. In the end, the 1997 NATO-Russia Final Act, signed on the eve of the alliance's invitations to three new members, proved a deft accommodation for both sides. It allowed Russia to avoid isolation without obliging it to withdraw its objections to enlargement; the same solution allowed NATO to create institutionalized ties not only to new members but to states (Russia, but also Ukraine, which negotiated a similar document with NATO, and other former Soviet states) that were, for the time being, left out.

But although the Final Act defused a dispute over enlargement, it has not created much of a cooperative relationship between Russia and the alliance. From the

[1]Because political gestures can be taken only so far before they bump up against organizational purposes, the finance ministers of the old G-7 continue to meet separately to address economic issues on which Russia lacks the standing for an equal role.

[2]The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is also little more than a meeting, but the Russians, who take part in some of the group's sessions along with several other outside powers, have found that they excel at one distinctive part of its organizational culture: an evening of skits, songs and other entertainment in which foreign ministers are supposed to ham it up, preferably in English. The Russians often steal the show: their zest for the event is in notable contrast to that of the Chinese, who are more inhibited as vaudevillians and less comfortable in English.

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moment the document was signed, the Russians have shown little enthusiasm for the project, and Russia's representatives at NATO have acted as though they were under instructions to resist implementing it. The Permanent Joint Council, the new forum created by the Final Act, has shown little life, and even before the Kosovo war Russia had blocked the establishment of a NATO "Military Liaison Mission" in Moscow. Joint peacekeeping deployments in Bosnia and Kosovo prove that cooperative arrangements can be hammered out in a crisis, but they are exceptions in a relationship that the Russians have never been comfortable with. Putin's remark to David Frost last spring, that Russia might someday be interested in joining the alliance, seemed for a moment to break this pattern; a day later, of course, he took it back.

One sees similar foot-dragging on other fronts. At the same meeting in the spring of 1997 at which Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin reached agreement on the NATO-Russia Final Act, the United States also offered its support for Russian accession to the World Trade Organization by the end of 1998. Now two years past this target date, Russia's effort to join the WTO is only a bit further along than its effort to develop a cooperative relationship with NATO. The ups and downs of the Russian economy in this period have surely been one factor blocking progress, as has the lack of top-down political initiative in the last years of Boris Yeltsin's presidency. In the absence of a sustained push for accession, domestic economic interests that expected to be losers in a more competitive international marketplace have been able to slow the process.

WTO negotiations are lengthy and complicated in the best of circumstances, and Russia's effort to join is likely to bog down again and again unless its leaders treat accession as more than just another trophy membership. If it is only that, the benefits of joining will hardly outweigh the costs of overruling special interests that believe the provisions of an accession agreement will affect them adversely. Far from being a trophy, entry into the WTO has to be viewed as a tool—for completing Russia's economic transformation and assuring it a place in the global economy. This has been the Chinese approach, and it is clear that at least some Russian officials see its advantages. It is equally clear, however, that the strategy will only succeed if it is endorsed at the very top. It cannot be *our* idea; it has to be theirs.

Making Russia Choose

RUSSIA's stalled participation in NATO and its slow-track approach to WTO accession confirm Brzezinski's insight that integration will not succeed unless the joining country has a real commitment to see it through. The same negative dynamic, it should be said, has hampered the process of economic transformation throughout the former Soviet Union: governments that saw their negotiations with the IMF as a kind of game whose object was to get new loans on the loosest possible conditions rarely made good use of the money once they got their hands on it. Not having "taken ownership" of a reformist program, they did not know what to do next or have the political muscle to move forward if they did.

Lawrence Summers, then deputy secretary of the Treasury, referred to this problem when, in the immediate aftermath of the 1998 Russian financial crisis, he said that any successful Russian recovery strategy had to be "Russian-owned"—that is, conceived, backed and implemented by the Russians themselves. It has been a key ingredient of Russia's far more successful economic performance since then that its governments have

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finally "taken ownership" of their own policy. Having stared into the abyss in August 1998, they stopped treating control of inflation, or smaller budget deficits, or better tax collection as concessions they had to make in order to qualify for IMF loans. To the contrary, Russian officials now typically say that the value of their relationship with the IMF does not concern loans at all; they want benchmarks against which to measure their own policy performance.[3]

Over the next two or three years, a series of first-order policy choices will test Russia's commitment to integration. On the security front, NATO will soon begin reviewing another round of enlargement decisions, to be discussed at its summit in 2002. On the economic front, WTO accession will be one factor determining whether Russia's current economic buoyancy, sustained for the time being by high oil prices, can continue.

These events will, of course, also pose a demanding test for Brzezinski's strategic design. He is right that seduction will not work as a way of getting Russia to make the right choices: we cannot, and should not, want the international integration of Russia more than its own government does. But if seduction is ruled out, then how exactly are we supposed to get our way?

Brzezinski offers, in effect, three different but overlapping answers to this question. The first approach involves persuasion: laying out for the Russians all the disadvantages of their present and prospective weakness and isolation. The second emphasizes diplomatic unilateralism: maneuvers that leave the Russians only one "viable option." Finally, he relies on generational change, confidently predicting that, as the current crop of Russian leaders gives way to the next, its successors will do the right thing as a matter of course. These approaches can be, and have been, part of an effective Western strategy. Yet, looked at closely, they do as much to underscore the difficulty of the enterprise as to identify a solution.

Consider, first, what can really be accomplished by cataloguing the Russians' domestic pathologies for them. The figures Brzezinski cites—the dismal statistics about lagging economic competitiveness and living standards, filthy air and water, birth defects and life expectancy, corrupt institutions, and so forth—are entirely familiar to Russians. What they say and print about their own situation is far worse than this.[4] It was candidate Putin himself who declared that his first task as president would be to grapple with the country's "humiliating poverty." And it is the same Putin who reminds audiences how long it will take for the Russian economy, even with very optimistic assumptions about future growth, to rise to the level of Portugal's.

---

[3]To deal with Putin's economic advisers is to see the inaccuracy of Brzezinski's claim that the key people in the Russian government could all have served at the top of the Soviet system as well. Since one could reasonably argue whether some Russian economic policymakers were more influenced by Friedman or by Hayek, Brzezinski's observation does not tell us what is most important about them. (Putin's national security team is a wholly different story.) There is a further problem with the claim: in Russia people outside the government now have power too. Consider Vladimir Gusinsky, or Anatoly Chubais, or even Boris Berezovsky. Not one of these (very different) people could have been an important figure under the Soviet system.

[4]Consider the almost incomprehensible estimate of the Ministry of Health that 40 percent of Russian men should be classed as alcoholics! See Judyth Twigg, "Russian Health Status in the 1990s: National Trends and Regional Variation" (Washington, DC: National Council for Eurasian and East European Research, 2000), p. 5.

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Nor do they have illusions about their international situation. The grim picture that Brzezinski paints—unstable Muslims to the south, multiplying Chinese to the east—is standard stuff for hyperventilating Russian geopoliticians (who, of course, make it grimmer still by adding aggressive Americans, Germans and Poles to the west). The only way one could start an argument in Moscow with Brzezinski's analysis would be by trying to persuade people that he actually offers a way out of their fix. He envisions an "epiphany"—a sudden, blinding awareness of the advantages of being a normal Western nation—that will, he says, "liberate Russia from its ominous geopolitical context."

The typical Russian reaction to such hyperbole will likely be skepticism, and rightly so. Is there, in fact, any foreseeable relationship that Russia can have with the EU or NATO that will make a measurable short-term difference in the depth of its domestic ills? Or that will insulate it against radical Islamist groups to the south? Russians are likely to think that they have to deal with these problems by putting their own house in order, and in this they are not wrong.

Suppose, then, that we cannot get the Russians to be better joiners merely by educating them about what is really in their interest. (In my experience, Russians are not the only people who do not enjoy being told *our* view of *their* interests.) Can we push them into it by actions that we take on our own? Brzezinski proposes to bull ahead—but with an outstretched hand. His program combines enlargement of NATO and the EU with formal statements envisioning some sort of eventual Russian participation in both organizations. By proposing to incorporate new members while deepening ties with those left out, he recapitulates the basic approach taken by the alliance in round one of enlargement. Clearly, he suggests, a second round will call for the same kind of balance.

Yet striking a balance will be far harder when NATO is considering Russia's immediate neighbors for membership. Russians who were willing privately to pooh-pooh the significance of adding Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic will not treat the Baltic states the same way. And they will hardly be mollified by suggestions that their own ties to NATO (or the EU) might develop faster if they were prepared to drop their objections to further enlargement. One of the crucial principles that made it possible to find a workable balance in the first round of NATO enlargement was precisely that the Russians were *not* asked to drop their objections to the idea. In a second round, those objections (at least to inclusion of the Baltic states) will be far more intense. Brzezinski proposes, in effect, the following deal to the Russians: if they do what we want most—welcome the enlargement of the EU and NATO to all who want to join—we will reciprocate by doing what they want *least*: accelerate the process and bring the alliance right up to their borders as early as next year.

The next round of NATO membership decisions is likely to have an enormous effect on Russian elite opinion—and, in turn, on the prospects for Brzezinski's third approach to getting Russia to make an unhesitating choice in favor of full integration into the West. As he sees it, the next generation of Russian leaders will have a fundamentally different mindset from the current one, reflecting far greater understanding of what the world is like and of what Western ways have to offer. With such people in charge, Russia's orientation toward the West should occur almost automatically.

This depiction of Russia's next generation is so persuasive that one could almost make waiting for it the heart of U.S. strategy. Yet quite apart from the fact

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that the country has just elected a forty-seven year-old president (so the next people in line may have quite a wait on their hands), the real problem with such a long-term strategy is the possibility that the next generation's world-view will change before its members come of age as national leaders. The number of events that might shake their confidence in the advantages of integration into the West is probably very small, and a protracted global depression is surely at the top of the list. But a sustained confrontation between their country and NATO can hardly be far behind.

Only One Option?

IN promoting Russia's integration into the West, we should certainly aim to create what Brzezinski calls "a compelling context" in which the Russians are more likely to make the right choice. Putin's recent statement welcoming the prospect of EU enlargement may even be a sign that this approach is working. And yet it is an illusion to think that we can so narrowly limit Russia's room to maneuver so that the right choice is its "only viable option." If nothing else, this objective is at odds with Brzezinski's insight that a lasting choice will have to be one that the Russians make themselves.

To understand the complexities involved in promoting a major country's path toward integration, it is hard to do better than the analyses that Brzezinski himself has published recently in *The National Interest*. In his discussions of both China and Turkey, there is no suggestion that the other guy's policy choices can ever be narrowed, godfather-style, to just one. His article on "Living With China" in the Spring 2000 issue sets its sights just as high as his proposals for Russia, announcing that the "central strategic task of U.S. policy toward China should be nothing less than the attainment of a fundamental, truly historic shift in the mindset of the Chinese elite." Yet, presumably because the goal is so important, Brzezinski favors extreme judiciousness in pursuing it. He worries, for example, about forcing choices on China that it would not find "palatable", and about pursuing outcomes that "no current Chinese leader could accept." He speaks of "the imperative of sensitivity for Chinese concerns", and warns that "how China is treated might well become a self-fulfilling prophesy." There is no brave talk here of leaving the Chinese just one viable option.

As for Turkey, Brzezinski's article on "Living With Russia" argues convincingly that anyone interested in promoting a historic shift in the mindset of the Russian elite needs to study Atatürk's achievement in giving his country a post-imperial European identity after the break-up of the Ottoman Empire.[5] The importance of Turkey's modernization strategy as a model not only for Russia but for other former Soviet states as well is beyond question. Brzezinski is also right that its ultimate success was made far more likely by the welcome that Turkey received in the West. A half century in NATO served as a kind of antechamber for its current candidacy before the EU.

Yet the story of Turkey's successful integration into the West has also been

[5]For the first use of this analogy that I am aware of, see Francis Fukuyama, "The Ambiguity of National Interest", in *Rethinking Russia's National Interests*, ed. Stephen Sestanovich (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1994). As useful as the analogy is, we should be aware of its limits. Atatürk's reformism was pushed forward by the military. It is hard to conceive of a Russian Westernizing consensus led by military officers, even younger ones. At least for now, the Russian military shelters some of the country's most reactionary thinking.

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one of ongoing unresolved tensions, many of which continue to the present day. To these, the United States and its European allies have responded over many decades with a balancing act combining encouragement and restraint. Turkey did indeed start to make itself "post-imperial" under Atatürk, but its relations with Greece, Cyprus, the Kurds and Armenia remained—and remain—extremely complicated, to say the least. There were other ways things could have turned out. Any one of a number of flashpoints could have precipitated a break between us. If Turkey can serve as a model for Russia, then let us be sure to make U.S. policy toward Turkey a model as well. This sophisticated policy did not go into reverse just because at any given moment Turkey's embrace of its integration into the West was less than unequivocal.

There is always more than one option, a fact that teaches us to be wary of grand designs. It is hard to argue with a plan that holds out the benefits of early membership in NATO for all the democratic states of Central and Eastern Europe that want it, *and* of consolidated democracy in a Russia that is coming to grips at last with its internal problems, *and* of expanding cooperation between NATO and Russia, *and* of reduced Russian pressure on its neighbors, *and* of a consensus among Russians so strong that all this feels like their own choice. But if this prospect sounds too good to be true, then we should have an honest debate about the trade-offs that we may face if the design does not work out as planned. If we are going to end up with something less than the best of all possible worlds, then let us think about it realistically in advance, so that we at least get the next-best world rather than a truly undesirable one.

To have the debate we need about trade-offs, nothing is more important than avoiding a mere restatement of old positions. This rule applies to those on both sides of past discussions. Those who used to argue that enlargement of the alliance would put Russian democracy at risk need to take account of its impressive durability; if it remains vulnerable in 2001 (on which more below), it is nevertheless not the vulnerability of 1996.

By the same token, those who used to argue that NATO and the EU were our only effective tools for assuring the stability of Central and Eastern Europe have to acknowledge that stability has put down deeper roots than one could have counted on a half decade ago. Like Russian democracy, this region may have its vulnerabilities, but they too have changed.

The Russians themselves will affect our debate about trade-offs, and they need to know it. It goes without saying that Russian bellicosity—menacing statements and worse—will only strengthen the case for putting enlargement on a fast track. But could Russian leaders who take a different approach, who at last get serious about their own integration on many different fronts, including in their relations with NATO, elicit a Western response that recognizes this change and tries to support it?

Finally, we cannot think our way through any of these problems without focusing on the East European state that worries most about a serious breach between Russia and the West: Ukraine. I know Ukrainians who hope to be in NATO; I know Ukrainians who do not; I do not know any who think there is a national consensus on the issue, or that one could take shape soon, or that it would be a good idea to try to induce one. In the best of all possible worlds, Ukraine could take its time sorting out its views, and if it wanted to approach NATO about a deeper association, even about membership, it could do so when ready. But the unraveling of a Brzezinski-style grand design could create difficult choices for

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Ukraine well before it is able to make them. Before we put ourselves or the Ukrainians in this position, we need to understand their sense of their own dilemmas far better than we, or even they, now do.

The Mighty Russian "State"

THERE IS ONE factor that might seem to make any talk of trade-offs irrelevant as we consider how to handle Russia, and that is what Brzezinski sees as the neo-imperialist mindset of the Russian elite. For him, it is obvious that Putin has already identified his "central goal" and it is "not democratic reform" but rather "the restoration of a powerful Russian state." Sure, he may for tactical reasons seek good relations with the West, but he has not made the historic decision to adopt a Western model to overcome Russia's many infirmities. Far from it: he just wants "to gain a free hand in dealing with the new states in the former Soviet space."

Putin does, in fact, talk ceaselessly about strengthening the Russian state, and he is not alone. When Russians complain about their health care, their drinking water or their niggardly pensions, they frequently trace these problems to "the weakness of the Russian state." When they worry that their armed forces have become dangerously feeble, or rail that other countries are trying to take advantage of them, their complaint will be the same: "the weakness of the Russian state." But in making what sounds like the same diagnosis, they are not necessarily proposing the same cure; in fact, they are usually not even using the same word.

The Russian word for "state" that means "complex of national institutions for the exercise of political power" is *gosudarstvo*. The word that means "national actor in international affairs" is *derzhava*. When a Russian politician promises to improve social services or crack down on criminals and corrupt public officials, the state he says he will strengthen is the Russian *gosudarstvo*. But if he touts the importance of rebuilding a mighty Russian state that will never be vulnerable to attack and will always have a large role in world affairs, he is more likely to say *derzhava*.

This distinction is no mere linguistic nicety. Only by keeping it in mind can we understand what Putin means when he says both that domestic problems are his top priority (this is his constant refrain) and that he is determined to strengthen the state. The "Open Letter to Russian Voters" that launched Putin's presidential candidacy last winter was littered with the word *gosudarstvo* and its derivatives; *derzhava*, by contrast, showed up only here and there. Candidate Putin obviously thought the voters wanted to hear that he would kick-start governmental institutions that have ceased to work for ordinary people and rescue the bureaucracy from the control of criminalized special interests.[6]

Understanding the different ways in which the Russians want to "strengthen the state" can help us to see that they are thinking coherently about the problems they face. But it can also help us see that a focus on their domestic pathologies will not necessarily facilitate their integration into the West. Consider this other formula from the "Open Letter": "The

[6]"It is impossible", he declared, "to help the weak if no taxes are paid to the public treasury. It is impossible to build a civilized market in a world permeated with corruption. No economic progress is possible if officials are dependent on capital." Some rightly questioned whether the "Open Letter" was anything more than campaign rhetoric, yet the same theme—the importance of "strengthening the state"—was sounded even more forcefully in Putin's so-called "State of the Union" speech to parliament in July. The latter speech paid virtually no attention to foreign policy.

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Responding to Chechnya

No Russian action of the past several years has produced more accusations that Russia has put itself outside the ranks of civilized countries than its brutal military campaign in Chechnya. The war was set off by an armed incursion by Chechen fighters into neighboring Dagestan in August 1999, followed a month later by a chain of large-scale urban terror bombings—actions against which any Western government would also have been obliged to retaliate forcefully. Yet the actual response was one that no Western government would have waged or even contemplated. Massive military operations were conducted against the Russian Federation's own population, with no discernible effort to limit civilian casualties and numerous documented instances of massacres and atrocities.

In the face of this, says Brzezinski, the United States produced "not a single noticeable response", a failure so shocking that, in Senate testimony, he actually suggested that the United States had "contributed to the scale of the genocide in Chechnya." This is an extraordinary accusation and requires a reply.

Now, it may be that Brzezinski does not believe that verbal condemnation meets the test of a "noticeable response", but for the record let it be said that this condemnation was strong and frequent. (See Deputy Secretary Talbott's statement at the outset of the Chechen campaign that the war put at risk almost everything Russia had accomplished as a democratic society. Secretary Albright summarized American criticisms in the *Washington Post* on March 8, 2000.) Chechnya was, largely at American instigation, a major focus of multilateral ministerial meetings in November 1999 (at the OSCE summit in Istanbul), December 1999 (at the G-8 foreign ministers' meeting in Berlin), March 2000 (when the Russian, EU and U.S. foreign ministers met in Lisbon) and July 2000 (at the G-8 foreign ministers' meeting in Japan). In all of these meetings, the Russian foreign minister was obliged to respond in

stronger the state [*gosudarstvo*], the freer the individual." Putin plainly does not mean by this that the average Russian citizen will feel freer if he knows that his country can kick around Georgia and Azerbaijan. The ostensible meaning is this: the average Russian's life will be better off if the central government is strong enough to, among other things, keep corrupt regional governors from running mini-despotisms that impoverish everyone except an inner circle of thugs and cronies. But it also carries with it a more ominous potential meaning: the anarchic effects of the past ten years have been so great that a major reassertion of governmental authority is needed to keep order.

"Order", says Putin soothingly, "is nothing more than rules." But what kind of rules? When the government's new doctrine on "information security" declares that the state has to take responsibility for ensuring that citizens receive correct information from the media, it is clear that the "rules" could start to chafe against basic democratic liberties.

If we tell ourselves that the main problem represented by a strong Russian state is what it can do to its neighbors, we are setting ourselves a task that in all likelihood we will be able to solve successfully.[7]

[7]As Brzezinski himself notes, a Russian drive for regional domination would be blocked by its steep economic costs, by the resistance of other post-Soviet states, and by Western support for their independence. See "Living With Russia", p. 10.

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detail to a list of steps that his Western counterparts said Russia had to take to begin to put itself in compliance with its international obligations. Without such persistent high-level criticism, it is hard to imagine even the few grudging actions Russia did take, such as allowing the International Committee of the Red Cross access to detention camps. And because other steps that were urged (such as launching an effective investigation of atrocities) were not taken, the United States and the EU co-sponsored, and secured passage of, an anti-Russian resolution at the annual meeting of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva in April 2000.

These were "noticeable" responses, certainly to the Russians. Equally "noticeable" to them was what happened in December 1999 when the second tranche of an IMF loan that had been negotiated the previous summer was ready to be disbursed. At the initiative of the United States, a strict examination was made of whether all the previously agreed conditions for the loan had been met, and the money was not disbursed. Russian officials complained that this was "linkage to Chechnya." Since then, the IMF has disbursed no funds to Russia. (Also, in December the Department of State intervened to delay consideration of a large Export-Import Bank loan for Russia. Russian officials again complained that they were being punished for Chechnya.)

Perhaps the most important response to the Russian campaign in Chechnya was the effort to prevent a spillover of hostilities that would threaten neighboring sovereign states, especially Georgia. Among other steps, the United States organized a deployment of OSCE monitors to the Georgian border, increased our assistance program for the Georgian border guards and re-focused it on the northern land border with Chechnya, scheduled a demonstration visit of U.S. military helicopters to Georgia, agreed to a separate sale of helicopters for the Georgian army, and repeatedly warned Russian officials—including President Putin himself—of the severe implications of any military pressure on Georgia. There is no doubt, fortunately, that the Russians "noticed" this response as well. *SS*

But the real world may present us with tasks for which we are not so well prepared. *Neo-authoritarianism may be a larger problem for Russia's integration into the West than neo-imperialism.* And it may also prove a larger problem for us, for two reasons.

First, it will be much harder to reach agreement about when the "strengthening of the state" has gone too far. After all, much of what Putin talks about involves measures that most of us would support if we were Russians and had witnessed first-hand the decrepitude and corruption of state institutions. But some of his measures could also easily produce a rollback of the past decade's democratic achievements. Russians who are concerned about this will be discouraged if all they hear us talking about is neo-imperialism—not the principal problem they think they face.

Second, even if we had clearer benchmarks for how much "strengthening of the state" is too much, the leverage we have in reacting to neo-authoritarianism in Russia is simply less than we have for countering neo-imperialism against its neighbors. For this reason, in "living with Russia" in the future we have to make sure that we hold on to such leverage as we have. As long as the G-8, for example, continues to define itself as the club of industrial democracies, Russia's status in the group will remain somewhat provisional, and constructively so. If Russian democracy were in real jeopardy, Putin's participation could, and should, be recon-

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sidered. Proposals (like Brzezinski's own[8]) to include China in a new G-9 should be judged in this light. It would be hard to imagine ever again putting Russian media freedom on the agenda of such an expanded group. When we tell the Russians that their democratic evolution is a key test of integration, we need to mean it.

Putin's Test

WHEN Madeleine Albright is asked whether she thinks President Putin is a democrat, she gives the following artful answer: she *thinks* he understands that Russia will not reach the goals he has publicly set for it unless it continues to develop as a democracy. The same thing can be said about Russia's integration into the West. It is hard to see how Putin can successfully address the deep structural problems he has described (to give him credit, he has described them more realistically than any other Russian leader) without a strong commitment to integration.

Over the past decade, Russia has—for good reasons and bad—done no more than a fraction of what was possible in advancing the process of integration. Its good reasons for being a poor joiner include political and economic upheaval, and weak and unfocused leadership. But there were bad reasons as well, and they include an expectation that Russia's political importance would guarantee a place at the high tables of international affairs. Winning a place by refashioning one's policies was a logic that others might follow, but not Russia.

If President Putin wants to turn back to this agenda with new seriousness, he will have many things going for him: a lift in the economy, a moment of relative political calm, and even his own credibility as an interpreter of Russia's interests. But the task of integration is also a harder one now. Over the next two years, during which questions about Russia's relations with both NATO and the WTO will be especially difficult, he is likely to be able to advance the process only by changing Russia's approach. This is Putin's test, and it will tell us whom we are dealing with. □

[8]See "Living With China", p. 19.

Zbigniew Brzezinski replies:

I will confine myself to only one issue raised in Dr. Sestanovich's commentary on my article. Evidently exercised by my criticism of the Clinton administration's feckless non-reaction to the Chechen tragedy, he cites a number of puerile verbal protestations that his State Department superiors made to the Russians, concluding triumphantly that the Russians doubtless "noticed" them. Unfortunately—encouraged also by President Clinton's public profession that, "I have no sympathy for the Chechen rebels", not to mention Clinton's shocking reference to Russia's "liberation" of Grozny—that is all they did. □

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China: *Getting the Questions Right*

Richard K. Betts and Thomas J. Christensen

THE CHALLENGE presented by a rising China is the principal issue facing American foreign policy. This is not always obvious to most Americans or even to many of our leaders. Since the end of the Cold War, defense policy has been absorbed in second-order problems of deterring or defeating mid-level powers such as Iraq, North Korea and Serbia, and in third-order problems of peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention. Over the long term, however, the first priority of a serious foreign policy is to handle challenges from discontented, nuclear-armed, major powers.

It is hardly inevitable that China will be a threat to American interests, but the United States is much more likely to go to war with China than it is with any other major power. Other current or emerging great powers either are aligned with the United States (NATO countries and Japan), are struggling against crippling decline (Russia), or, while having a tense diplomatic relationship with Washington, have no plausible occasion for war with America (India). China, by contrast, is a rising power with high expectations, unresolved grievances and an undemocratic government.

Debate about whether and how China might threaten U.S. security interests has often been simplistically polarized. Views range from alarmist to complacent: from those who see China emerging as a hefty and dangerous superpower, to those who believe the country's prospects are vastly overrated; and from those who see its economic growth as an engine for building threatening military capabilities, to those who see that growth as a welcome force for political liberalization and international cooperation.

Most strategic debate about China still focuses on a few simple questions. With respect to capabilities, these revolve mainly around whether the Chinese armed forces will develop to the point that they rival U.S. military power, and whether the economic surge—with its implications for military transformation—will continue indefinitely or stall. With regard to intentions, China watchers want to know how thoroughly and how soon the country will integrate into a global economy that allegedly constrains conflict; whether Beijing will adopt aggressive aims as its power grows; and whether political liberalization will occur as its wealth grows. Concern also zeroes

Richard K. Betts is director of the Institute of War and Peace Studies at Columbia University, and a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Thomas J. Christensen is associate professor of political science and a member of the Security Studies Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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in on whether the People's Republic of China (PRC) has the ability to take Taiwan by force.

These are relevant questions at the most basic level, but they are the wrong ones to generate progress in a mature debate. The most worrisome possibilities are those that lie beyond the answers to these questions, and between alarmist and complacent viewpoints. The truth is that China can pose a grave problem even if it does not become a military power on the American model, does not intend to commit aggression, integrates into a global economy, and liberalizes politically. Similarly, the United States could face a dangerous conflict over Taiwan even if it turns out that Beijing lacks the capacity to conquer the island.

Will China's Military Power Rival America's?

THERE is little disagreement that the People's Liberation Army (PLA), a generic designation for all the Chinese armed forces, remains a threadbare force, well below Western standards. Pockets of excellence notwithstanding, most personnel are poorly educated and trained. Weapons systems are old, and even those acquired most recently are inferior to those in Western arsenals. Many units spend a good deal of time in non-military activities; staffs do not practice complex, large-scale operations; exercises and training regimens are limited; and equipment is not well maintained. Even according to the highest estimates, defense spending per soldier is low by First World standards, indicating the dominance of quantity over quality in the Chinese forces.

The main disagreement among Western analysts of China's military is about whether the PLA is poised to move out of its unimpressive condition and into a new era of modernity, efficiency and competitiveness, as anticipated economic reform and growth translate into military improvement. Arguments to that effect are supported by a number of PLA writings about a prospective Chinese "revolution in military affairs" (RMA).[1] The current backwardness of the PLA reflects its low priority in the country's modernization efforts since the 1970s, and the diversion of the energy of the military into business activities (which are now supposed to be curtailed). In this view, the military potential of the PLA will be liberated when the political leadership decides to give it significantly more of the resources generated by economic development.

For China to develop a military on the model of the United States would be a tremendous stretch. The main issue is not whether Beijing will have high defense budgets or access to cutting-edge technology. A rich China might well be able to acquire most types of advanced weaponry. Deeply ingrained habits of threat assessment in the U.S. defense community encourage focusing on these factors. Unfortunately, however, basic "bean counts" of manpower and units and the quality of weapons platforms are poor measures of truly modern military capability. More fundamental to that assessment is whether the PLA establishment is capable of using whatever increase in resources it might receive to build the complex supporting infrastructure necessary to make Chinese forces competitive in combat. The PLA's current mediocrity—like that of many armed forces in the world—may be rooted in a history, ideology and culture that are incompatible with the patterns of organization and social interaction necessary to rival the best First World militaries. This does not

[1]Michael Pillsbury, ed., *Chinese Views of Future Warfare* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1997), part 4.

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mean that the PLA can never break out of this box. It does mean that it will not be easy to do, and will not occur quickly.

Modern military effectiveness has become more a matter of quality than of quantity, and less a matter of pure firepower than of the capacity to coordinate complex systems. The essence of the American RMA lies in the interweaving of capacities in organization, doctrine, training, maintenance, support systems, weaponry and the overall level of professionalism. These factors are harder to measure, but they are what make it feasible to assimilate and apply state-of-the-art weapons effectively. Those capacities require high levels of education throughout a military force, a culture of initiative and innovation, and an orientation toward operating through skill networks as much as through traditional command and obedience hierarchies. Few militaries have developed these capabilities. Indeed, experience in the Persian Gulf and Kosovo indicate that the United States is in a class by itself in these respects. If the PLA has the resources to integrate complexity and a willingness to delegate authority to overcome its mediocrity, it is a well-kept secret. As yet it is not obvious that PLA effectiveness is likely to be closer to that of the American military than to that of, say, Iraq.

If the PLA remains second-rate, should the world breathe a sigh of relief? Not entirely. First, American military power is not the only relevant standard of comparison. Other armed forces in Asia that the PLA could come up against are much closer to the Chinese standard than to the American. (This is true even of Taiwan's technologically sophisticated military, whose long isolation has eroded its quality.[2]) Second, the United States has global interests and often finds itself distracted or pinned down in other regions. Third, the Chinese do not need to match U.S. capabilities to cope with them. Rather than trying to match an American revolution in military affairs, they might do better to develop a *counter*-revolution by devising asymmetrical strategic options on various parts of the technological spectrum that can circumvent U.S. advantages.

One such example could be "cyberwar" attacks on the complex network of information systems that stitches American military superiority together. Another could be the use of new weapons like land attack cruise missiles or lower tech weapons such as naval mines to impede American access to the region. Still another could be the modification of China's no first-use policy on nuclear weapons, making an exception for repelling an invasion of Chinese territory. Although it is almost unimaginable that China would use nuclear weapons in an effort to gain political concessions from Taiwan, it might threaten their use to deter U.S. military action on behalf of the island. As Disarmament Ambassador Sha Zukang said in 1996, "As far as Taiwan is concerned it is a province of China. . . . So the policy of no-first-use does not apply."[3] Even though the Foreign Ministry subsequently repudiated the statement, nothing makes a future adaptation of doctrine in that direction unthinkable.

Pundits on defense policy commonly observe that China lacks power projection capabilities—the ability to send and sustain combat forces far from home. By U.S. standards this is true. Talk about obtaining aircraft carriers has produced nothing deployable, the navy and air forces lack the requisite assets for "lift" (transporting and supplying large units

[2]See James Lilley and Carl Ford, "China's Military: A Second Opinion", *The National Interest* (Fall 1999).

[3]Quoted in *China, Nuclear Weapons, and Arms Control* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2000), p. 31n.

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for operations abroad), and Chinese forces have negligible logistical capacity as we know it. For those worried about facing a Chinese force on the American model, these are all good grounds for optimism. Indeed, there is general agreement that Beijing lacks the capability at present to invade Taiwan and that it could take decades to overcome the obstacles. But China does not need to match American standards to reshape the Asian strategic environment. This becomes especially clear when one considers *where* power projection will be an issue.

Taiwan is both the most dangerous and most likely instance of Chinese power projection (more on which below), but it is not the only one. China has conceivable points of conflict in several places that would not require its forces to cross large bodies of water, and where it would not be facing opposition as potent as Taiwan's military. Although less likely than conflict over Taiwan, an imbroglio in Korea would be scarcely less dangerous if the Pyongyang regime were to collapse and South Korean or American forces were to move into the vacuum without Beijing's agreement. Far too little attention has been focused on the odds of miscalculation in a confused situation of this sort. The PLA does not have the American army's logistical capacity, but even a half century ago it managed to project a force of hundreds of thousands of men deep into Korea.

While the Chinese navy is weak, some of its neighbors' navies are weaker still. Two of these neighbors, Vietnam and the Philippines, have outstanding sovereignty disputes with China and have not fared well in naval skirmishes in the past three decades. We also cannot rule out the possibility of a land attack. The PLA did poorly in its invasion of Vietnam over twenty years ago, but the Vietnamese army is now less than half the size it was then, and the Vietnamese economic base is far more inferior to China's than it was in 1978. Logistical limitations would hamper, but not preclude, PRC action in Mongolia, or in the Russian Far East, if that region were to fall out of Moscow's effective control. Granted, conflict over these places is improbable. The problem is that the same could have been said of most wars before they happened.

Will China Become the World's Leading Economy?

MILITARY potential grows out of economic capacity. China's economy, like its military, is neither to be envied nor denigrated. In recent years it has been the fastest growing major economy in the world. Until strains became evident in the late 1990s, it was common to project high growth rates straight into the future and to see China's GNP surpassing America's early in the twenty-first century.[4] But China's economy faces daunting challenges. And even if it solves many of its problems, the central government may not have sufficient control over the fruits of growth to use them for military coercion.

Even if China achieved the highest GNP in the world, low per capita wealth would persist, limiting disposable income that could be reallocated to the military. In any case, the fantastic economic surge of the last two decades has sputtered. Although China's economy seems to be recovering, it has just completed three years of deflation, and this despite dangerous levels of government deficit spending on infrastructure projects. Such deficits, and the high ratio of unrecover-

[4]This point would come between 2013 and 2040, depending on whether purchasing power parity or official exchange rates were used to estimate. William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World", *International Security* (Summer 1999), p. 33n.

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able bank loans to GNP, risk exposing the economy to the same dangers experienced in Southeast Asia and Korea in 1997.

Straight-line projections in the negative direction would, of course, be as naive as the excessive expectations of the 1990s. One common and rather condescending mistake made by some foreign analysts of China is to offer a long list of problems and then forget to mention that Chinese elites are smart enough to do something about them. Under the economic leadership of Premier Zhu Rongji, the Chinese Communist Party has tried to reform the financial sector, force the military to abandon much of its commercial empire (including its lucrative smuggling operations), and meet the stringent demands of China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Still, most of the methods available to spur growth involve politically risky measures, such as reform of the financial sector and state-owned enterprises, that threaten to leave tens of millions of additional urban residents jobless.[5] These would join the ranks of the floating population of more than 100 million already in search of work. Similar problems affect the military, as cutbacks in the overall size of the PLA (needed for modernization and professionalization) create yet more disgruntled citizens. To maintain comfortable lifestyles, especially for officers, the military became dependent on business activities and large-scale smuggling of goods otherwise subject to high tariffs. If able officers and soldiers are to stay in uniform, then, the military units need to be subsidized at a high rate in order to implement successfully the plan to get the PLA out of commercial activities and back into the barracks.

All in all, there are no easy ways out for Beijing. Even if all growth-spurring measures work and the Communist Party maintains stability during the transition, the process of doing so will be expensive—especially for a central government that takes in a far smaller percentage of GNP than do Western governments. As China grows through capitalist reforms, Beijing must scramble to find new ways to tax private wealth. However inefficient they may have been, large state-owned enterprises provided a large portion of government revenues. The soft loans that officials forced government-owned banks to give to these enterprises functioned as an indirect tax on families, which, before Chinese membership of the WTO, had no alternatives to the state banks. If the Party is successful in demolishing both the monopoly of state-owned banks and the sturdy safety net for state-owned enterprises, it will need to raise money elsewhere for the government operating budget. That budget, in turn, will be strained by increases in welfare spending needed to maintain social stability—pensions for the unemployed and retired, and compensations to the military for its lost sources of legal and illegal revenue.

What is left over will be available to invest in education (critical to creating sustained growth in high-tech areas) and in military modernization. However, even if China's economy and high-tech sectors were to grow rapidly, it is not clear that Beijing will be able to channel resources effectively to create armed forces that could rival those of the United States, even in the region. For one thing, it is doubtful that the state will be able to channel young technical talent into defense research and development. China's turn to Russia and Israel for military technology is worrisome, but if it continues it will say more about China's inability to close the technological gap with the West than anything else.

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[5]See David Zweig, "Undemocratic Capitalism: China and the Limits of Economism", *The National Interest* (Summer 1999).

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TO PESSIMISTS steeped in realpolitik, a rich China will necessarily be a threat, because economic power can be translated into military power and power generates ambition. To optimists impressed with the revolutionary implications of globalization, however, a more powerful China will not be a threat because it will have too much to lose from disrupting international trade and investment. The latter view is more common in the West than the former, which seems to many to reek of old thinking.

The notion that a web of commercial ties discourages war, however, is itself quite old, if not exactly venerable. It was popularized by Henry Thomas Buckle in the 1850s, by Norman Angell just a year before World War I erupted, and again in the 1970s, when interdependence was said to have reduced the utility of force. Most recently, at a White House rally for permanent normal trade relations, Al Gore quoted his father as saying, "When goods do not cross borders, armies will."

The argument this time around is that the proposition is finally true because the nature of interdependence has changed in a crucial way. A century ago it was characterized by vertical trade between imperial centers and colonies, trade in final products between wealthier nations, and portfolio investments. Today there is much more direct investment and transnational production of goods, which fosters "a growing interpenetration of economies, in the sense that one economy owns part of another."[6] With the PRC, Taiwan, Japan and the United States all owning pieces of each other, how can they fight without destroying their own property? As the Chinese elite make more and more money from bilateral investments with Taiwan, simple greed will prevent huffing and puffing from crossing the line to war. If development thoroughly enmeshes the PRC in the globalized economy, therefore, peace will follow.

There are at least two problems with this latest version of interdependence theory. One is that *both* sides in a political dispute have a stake in not overturning profitable economic integration. The PRC might not want to kill the golden goose, but neither would Taiwan or the United States. Why, then, should Beijing be any more anxious to back down in a crisis than Taipei or Washington? Mutual dependence makes a political conflict a game of chicken, in which each side expects the other to bow to the stakes, and in which collision may result rather than concession.

The second problem is that there is little reason to assume that sober economic interest will necessarily override national honor in a crisis. A tough stand by Beijing may be viewed from the inside as essential for regime survival, even if it is not seen by detached observers as being in China's "national interest." In an imbroglio over Taiwan, which capitals will feel the strongest emotional inhibitions against backing down? Beijing and Taipei both have a greater material, moral and historical stake in the outcome than does the United States.

The global economy does indeed change logical incentives to compromise in political conflict, but not to the degree that it makes Beijing likely to be more "reasonable" than anyone else. Economic globalization does not eliminate the high priority that nations place on their political identity and integrity. Drawing China into the web of global interdependence may do more to encourage peace than war, but it cannot guarantee that the pursuit of heartfelt political interests will be blocked by a fear of economic consequences.

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[6]Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), pp. 146-7.

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Will China Become Aggressive?

WHETHER China has aggressive motives is what most policymakers want to know about Beijing's strategic intentions. Optimists say the answer is no, because the PRC is ideologically anti-imperialist and seeks only respect as a status quo great power. Pessimists say the answer is yes, because a seething set of Chinese grudges and territorial ambitions are on hold only for a lack of confidence in capability, or simply because all great powers tend to become aggressive when they get the chance.

But such focusing on the unlikely odds of deliberate aggression diverts attention from possibilities that are both much more likely and almost as dangerous. Most countries viewed as aggressors by their adversaries view their own behavior as defensive and legitimate. Whether Beijing is a tiger in waiting, about to set out deliberately on a predatory rampage, is not the most relevant question. No evidence suggests that Chinese leaders have an interest in naked conquest of the sort practiced by Genghis Khan, Napoleon Bonaparte or Adolf Hitler. The model more often invoked by pessimists is Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany. Like Germany a century ago, China is a late-blooming great power emerging into a world already ordered strategically by earlier arrivals; a continental power surrounded by other powers who are collectively stronger but individually weaker (with the exception of the United States and, perhaps, Japan); a bustling country with great expectations, dissatisfied with its place in the international pecking order, if only with regard to international prestige and respect. The quest for a rightful "place in the sun" will, it is argued, inevitably foster growing friction with Japan, Russia, India or the United States.

Optimists do not have a hard time brushing off this analogy to a state of a different culture on a different continent at a different time, a long-gone era when imperialism was the norm for civilized international behavior. Their benign view, that economic development and trade will inevitably make China fat and happy, uninterested in throwing its weight around, strikes them as common sense. It could turn out to be true. It is more an article of faith, however, than a prediction grounded in historical experience. The United States, for example, is quite interested in gaining the goodies from globalization, yet on the world stage it sometimes throws its weight around with righteous abandon.

Indeed, the most disturbing analogy for China's future behavior may not be Germany but the United States. If China acts with the same degree of caution and responsibility in its region in this century as the United States did in its neighborhood in the past century, Asia is in for big trouble. Washington intervened frequently in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean for reasons most Americans consider legitimate, defensive, altruistic and humane. The United States and its allies in Asia, however, would see comparable Chinese regional policing as a mortal threat. Even if China does not throw its weight around, the fact that there are others who can respond to the growth of Chinese power sets up the possibility of a classic spiral of tense actions and reactions. China faces alliances involving the United States, Japan, Australia and South Korea, and potential alliances in Southeast Asia.

Would Chinese Liberalization Guarantee Peace?

MANY ASSUME that as long as democratization accompanies the growth of Chinese power, China will not necessarily pose a security challenge. This would hold true even if China proves able to

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maintain high levels of economic and technological growth, a healthy degree of government accumulation of the increasing national wealth, and, thereby, military modernization. This theory of the democratic peace—that developed democracies virtually never fight one another—is currently the most influential political science theory among American foreign policy elites.

Even if we accept the democratic peace theory at face value, there are several problems with applying it to China. First, as Fareed Zakaria has noted, the theory really applies only to liberal democracies on the Western model, ones with restraints on government action and guarantees of minority rights. Democratization in China could just as conceivably turn in an illiberal direction, on the model of post-Tito Yugoslavia, Iran or other unpleasant examples of violent activism.

Second, the democratic peace theory does not apply clearly to civil war. Democracies must recognize each other as democracies for the theory to apply.[7] They also have to view each other as legitimate, independent and sovereign states. No matter how many Americans and Taiwanese believe that Taiwan is or should be a sovereign state, this view is widely rejected on the mainland (and is not a premise of past or current U.S. policy).

Third, while liberal democracy is pacific, the process of becoming a democracy can be violent and destabilizing. This is particularly true of democratizing states that lack developed civil societies, independent news media, healthy outlets for popular grievances, and a marketplace for ideas where countervailing views can be debated. This gives elites incentives to manipulate populist or nationalist themes and to adopt tough international policies as an electoral strategy.[8]

The Chinese Communist Party has behaved like many authoritarian regimes, but with much more success. It has systematically prevented the rise of both an independent press and a civil society. Although the foreign press has penetrated China, domestic political publications are still strictly circumscribed by the state. As the recent crackdown on the Falun Gong demonstrates, the Party is afraid of any group that organizes for any purpose without state sanction, regardless of how apolitical it appears to be.

The Chinese government's concerns about its legitimacy are not mere expressions of paranoia. The intensity of criticism of the leadership that one hears privately in places ranging from taxi cabs to government offices is astonishing. Awareness of its unpopularity gives the government in Beijing incentives to use nationalism as a replacement for the now hollow shell of communist ideology. But the Party is also aware that nationalism is not an inert tool to be pulled out of a kit and manipulated at the whim of the government. It is double-edged. Volatile and potentially uncontrollable, especially on emotional issues such as relations with Japan and Taiwan, nationalism is powerful enough to prop up a communist party in a capitalist society, but it could also severely damage the party if it were turned against the state. Officials in Beijing are aware that nationalism was a major force in the Communist Party's overthrow of the Kuomintang, as it was in the 1911–12 revolution that overthrew the Qing dynasty. This is probably why, during the row with Japan over the Senkaku Islands in the summer of 1996, the Party actively prevented students and workers from marching in protest to the Japanese embassy.

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[7]John M. Owen IV, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War: American Politics and International Security* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).

[8]Edward D. Mansfield and Jack L. Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War", *International Security* (Summer 1995).

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According to one prominent Chinese foreign affairs expert, since the May 1999 NATO bombing of the embassy in Belgrade, the authorities in Beijing have been very concerned about an increasing trend in public opinion that views the leaders as soft in responding to international humiliations, and sees them even as "traitors" (*maiguo zei*) interested only in business prospects. He and others argue that the protests outside the American embassy in Beijing were not so much instigated by the Communist Party, as many in the West assumed, but rather were managed, controlled and ultimately suppressed by the Party. One retired Chinese military officer touched on a similar theme during the 1996 Senkaku crisis. He maintained that, if the Party allowed the people to protest unhindered, the first day they would be protesting against Japan, the next day against the lack of response by the government, and on the third day against the government itself.

In the early phases of democratization, China should be ripe for jingoism. Hypernationalism could be exploited to mobilize popular support and to deflect criticism of the state, especially given the existence of irredentist claims, and the danger of ethnic and regional "splittism" on the mainland and in Taiwan. If democratization were to occur in the current context of weak institutions, political leaders and opposition parties would have incentives to appeal to nationalism in ways that could destabilize the region. In fact, this is a favorite, though perhaps cynical, argument offered to foreigners by communist opponents of multiparty democracy.

There are, however, plausible scenarios in which Chinese democratization might reduce international conflict. Democratization could make the mainland more imaginative with regard to the frameworks for unification offered to Taiwan, thus making meaningful cross-strait political dialogue more likely. Political liberalization might also make the prospect of eventual accommodation with the mainland more palatable to Taiwan and discourage the island's diplomatic adventurism. But that possibility is not necessarily more likely than its opposite: a renewed belief by Taiwan that the island has its own national identity, that unification with the mainland under any circumstances is unacceptable, and that democratization on the mainland is a threat to Taiwanese goals. Taiwan may see a closing window of opportunity, with the hopes of gaining true independence reduced as the West's sympathy for Taiwan's opposition to unification hardens.

If Americans view mainland democratization as genuine, such fears on Taiwan are well placed. Would the United States risk war to prevent a democratic Taiwan from becoming part of a larger democratic China? The main reasons a president could currently use to mobilize Americans around action in defense of Taiwan's democracy would simply disappear. Many observers view democracy as Taiwan's biggest security asset, because it increases U.S. support. They are right. But it is not just democracy that provides Taiwan's security; it is the current contrast between Taiwan's democracy and the mainland's authoritarianism.

Can the Mainland Conquer Taiwan?

THE POSSIBILITY of war with China over Taiwan is arguably the most dangerous threat that U.S. security policy faces in the coming decade. No other flashpoint is more likely to bring the United States into combat with a major power, and no other contingency compels Washington to respond with such ambiguous commitment. U.S. policy regarding the defense of Taiwan is uncertain, and thus so is the

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understanding in Beijing and Taipei—and in Washington—over how strongly the United States might react in different circumstances. Because Taiwan is more independent than either Washington or Beijing might prefer, neither great power can fully control developments that might ignite a crisis. This is a classic recipe for surprise, miscalculation and uncontrolled escalation.

Traditional questions about Chinese intentions and capabilities miss the mark in analyzing the likelihood of war and the probable course war would take. A PRC attack on a Taiwan following the pursuit of formal independence from the Chinese nation would be viewed (quite sincerely) in Beijing as purely defensive, to preserve generally recognized territorial sovereignty. Many outside China would view the attack as a sign of belligerence. But military activity against an independence-minded Taiwan might have little relevance to Beijing's behavior on other issues, even for other sovereignty disputes such as those over the Senkaku or Spratly Islands.

The niceties of balance of power calculations could prove relatively unimportant in determining whether China would use force over Taiwan and whether it would do so effectively. U.S. efforts to create a stable balance across the Taiwan Strait might deter the use of force under certain circumstances, but certainly not all. Moreover, such efforts would miss the major point of cross-strait strategic interaction. China's military strategy in a conflict over Taiwan would likely be to punish and coerce rather than to control, tasks for which its military may be able to use force to great effect. The PLA's ability to mount a Normandy-style assault on the island is not the toughest question. Geography (the water barrier), together with U.S. supplies, would provide powerful means to Taiwan for blocking such an invasion, even without direct U.S. combat involvement.

A greater challenge would be a blockade by the PRC, which has a large number of submarines and mines. Taiwan's proximity to the mainland and its dependence on international trade and investment enhance the potential effect of blockades—or coercive campaigns involving ballistic and cruise missiles—even if the military impact would be modest. The PRC might thus be able to damage severely the island's economy regardless of the number of F-16s, AWACS aircraft and theater missile defense batteries the island can bring to bear. Moreover, to break a blockade by sweeping the seas would likely require a direct attack on Chinese vessels. If Chinese forces had not already targeted U.S. ships by that point, it would be up to Washington to decide to fire the first shots against a nuclear-armed country that was attempting to regain limited control of what it believes is its own territory.

Some think that the United States should give Taiwan military assistance or defend it directly even in the extreme case that it openly declares legal independence. Many assume that the United States could deter an attack from the mainland and that, if worse came to worst, the United States would prevail in a war should deterrence fail. These assumptions, unfortunately, are suspect. Before being deterred, Beijing would have to weigh the costs of inaction against action. The perceived cost of inaction against Taiwanese independence is very high. No leader can count on survival if labeled the next Li Hongzhang, the diplomat who ceded Taiwan to Japan in the 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki.

Many in Beijing believe that the United States lacks the national will to pursue a war against China to save Taiwan. If the prospect of casualties did not deter the United States from intervening, the reasoning goes, even low levels of casualties would frighten it into

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early withdrawal. Following this logic, China need not defeat the U.S. military in wartime or close the gap in military power in peacetime. Rather, the strategic requirement is much lower: to put a number of American soldiers, sailors and airmen at risk.

It is dangerous that so many Chinese seem to subscribe to this "Somalia analogy." Washington would probably not be deterred by fears of casualties if it decided that Taiwan was being bullied without serious provocation, any more than it was deterred from attacking Iraq in 1991 by high pre-war casualty estimates. Nor is it likely that, once the United States had made the momentous decision to gear up for combat against a power like China, it would quit easily after suffering a small number of casualties.

Thinking over the long term, however, it is hard to imagine how the United States could "win" a war to preserve Taiwan's independence against a resolute China. Too many analyses inside the Beltway stop at the operational level of analysis, assuming that tactical victories answer the strategic question. Sinking the Chinese navy and defeating an invasion attempt against the island would not be the end of the story. Unless the U.S. Air Force were to mount a massive and sustained assault against mainland targets, the PRC would maintain the capability to disrupt commerce, squeeze Taiwan, and keep U.S. personnel at risk. As one American naval officer put it, as a nation much larger than Iraq or Yugoslavia, "China is a cruise missile sponge." This will be doubly true once China builds more road-mobile, solid-fuel missiles and learns better ways to hide its military assets.

Moreover, strikes against the mainland would involve huge risks. Recall that for three years, while Chinese forces were killing U.S. soldiers in Korea, the Truman administration refrained from carrying combat to the mainland for fear of a wider war—and this at a time when China had no nuclear weapons and its Soviet allies had fewer than China now has. China maintains the capacity to strike the U.S. homeland with nuclear missiles, and to strike U.S. bases in the region with both conventional and nuclear missiles. China has or is feverishly obtaining increasingly sophisticated systems, including Russian SA-10 air defense batteries, stealth detection technologies, anti-ship missiles, land attack cruise missiles, accurate ballistic missiles, and new submarines. Any of these could give the United States and its regional allies pause before widening a campaign against the Chinese mainland.

And if the issue is a PRC blockade of Taiwan, who will bear the onus of starting a war between China and the United States? If a conventional engagement leaves U.S. naval forces in control of the Taiwan Strait, can anyone be confident that Beijing would not dream of using a nuclear weapon against the Seventh Fleet? And then what? Such a scenario of nuclear escalation seems fancifully alarmist to many in the post-Cold War era. But is it any more so than such concerns ever were when defense planning focused on crises with the Soviet Union? Is this an experiment a U.S. commander-in-chief should run?

Even if we dismiss entirely any nuclear danger, there are still considerable problems for the United States. If Chinese conventional capabilities do not deter American escalation, and if Chinese forces prove relatively ineffective against U.S. weaponry, a broader question remains: How long would the United States be willing to continue a war of attrition against a country of more than a billion people? How long would it be willing even to camp multiple aircraft carrier battle groups and minesweepers off the Chinese coast? What would American allies such as Japan—where crucial U.S.

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bases are located—do? Taiwan will always be just 100 miles from mainland China, and Chinese nationalism is extremely unlikely to wither under American bombardment. Indeed, it would probably harden. What, then, is the endgame? A negotiated deal that rejected Taiwanese independence but protected *de facto* autonomy would be tempting in this situation. In this limited but very real sense, the effort to defend an independent Taiwan would have failed and China would be victorious, since occupation and direct control of Taiwan is not Beijing's stated strategic goal.

The point here is not that a U.S. commitment to defend Taiwan is meaningless. It could be a major factor in deterring more activist impulses in Beijing among those who might want to do more than just prevent a declaration of independence, or those who view current trends in cross-strait relations with much more pessimism than their colleagues. But we should not overestimate the U.S. ability to deter and defeat China in all circumstances.

Reasons for Pessimism

OPTIMISTS on the China challenge are often guilty of contradictory arguments. On the one hand, they argue that China will only become a dangerous enemy if the United States treats it like one. At the same time, they attempt to demonstrate why China will not be able to develop the military capacity to pose any appreciable threat to us for a very long time. How can China be both hopelessly weak and potentially dangerous?

There are ways to square this circle by asking the right questions. China can pose security challenges to the United States even if it is unlikely to narrow the gap in military power. This is true because of geography; because of America's reliance on alliances to project power; and because of China's capacity to harm U.S. forces, U.S. regional allies, and the American homeland, even while losing a war in the technical, military sense.

Optimists are correct to focus on Chinese intentions and the potentially pacifying influences that the United States and other international actors can have on China. But they often assume too much about the positive effects of globalization, interdependence and political liberalization, because they underestimate the role of nationalist emotion and the possibility of misperceptions and inadvertence in war. They also forget that interdependence is a two-way street that restrains not only the Chinese, but China's potential adversaries as well.

In addressing the China challenge, the United States needs to think hard about three related questions: first, how to avoid crises and war through prudent, coercive diplomacy; second, how to manage crises and fight a war if the avoidance effort fails; third, how to end crises and terminate war at costs acceptable to the United States and its allies.

In terms of coercive diplomacy, the United States needs to balance deterrence and reassurance, recognizing that, on the one hand, deterrence is complicated by the increasing capabilities of the PLA, and that, on the other hand, if certain core interests of China are disregarded by the United States, even a relatively weak China might resort to force. The essence of deterrence and war planning lies in considering military responses—including crisis management and diplomacy—to a Chinese attack. It might be advantageous to have the capacity to sink a Chinese destroyer pre-emptively before it launched its missiles, but an American admiral might never receive authorization to do so in a real crisis. Similarly, it might be beneficial to have the capacity to strike

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theater missile sites pre-emptively, but such action might cause unwanted escalation and alienate needed allies. This is one reason that effective local missile defenses are a good idea, even though they may be much less effective and much more expensive than "shooting the archer."

The United States also needs to consider for how long and at what cost it is willing to fight for certain goals. For how long would the United States be willing to fight to keep Taipei from an agreement with Beijing in which Taipei maintains a very high degree of military and political autonomy, but is nonetheless, in terms of abstract sovereignty, part of China? (In answering this question, remember that the United States made similar concessions to Belgrade regarding Kosovo after defeating Yugoslavia militarily.) It is better to ask such questions about the end of a war before the unpredictable forces of emotion regarding sunk costs and reputation take hold after a war breaks out.

China's growing power causes so many headaches largely because its strategic implications are not fully clear. But before one laments the rise of Chinese power, one should consider an even more uncertain alternative: Chinese weakness and collapse. Nothing ordains that China's march to great power status cannot be derailed. Severe economic dislocation and political fragmentation could throw the country into disorder, and the central government could prove too crippled to use external adventures to rally support and maintain unity. Hardbitten realists should hesitate before hoping for such developments, however. The last time China was weak and disunified—in the era of warlordism and revolution in the first half of the twentieth century—it was a disaster, not only for China, but also for international peace and stability. □

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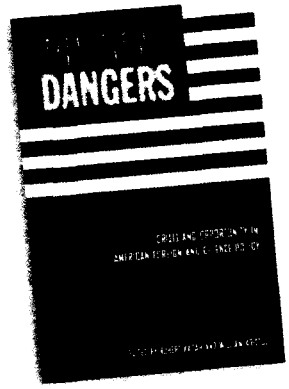

PRESENT DANGERS

Crisis and Opportunity in American Foreign and Defense Policy

Edited by Robert Kagan and William Kristol

After triumphing in the Cold War and achieving a smashing victory in Desert Storm, it seemed as though the United States would be able to shape a new international system to protect its interests and advance the cause of liberal democracy across the globe. But instead of seizing this unique moment, the United States under the Clinton/Gore administration has indulged in a gradual but steady moral and strategic disarmament, leading to the uncertain and threatening international situation in which we now find ourselves.

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American Sovereignty and the UN

Jesse Helms

EARLIER THIS year, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan delivered an address to the General Assembly in which he declared that "the last right of states cannot and must not be the right to enslave, persecute or torture their own citizens." The peoples of the world, he said, have "rights beyond borders." He is surely correct.

The sovereignty of nations must, of course, be respected. But, properly understood, nations derive their sovereignty—their legitimacy—from the consent of the governed. Thus, Slobodan Milosevic can hardly claim sovereignty over Kosovo when he has murdered Kosovars and piled their bodies into mass graves. Nor can Fidel Castro or Saddam Hussein hide behind phony claims of sovereignty while they oppress their peoples.

As they watch the UN struggle with the question of sovereignty, however, many Americans are left exceedingly puzzled. Intervening in cases of widespread oppression and massive human rights abuses is not a new concept for the United States. The American people have a long history of doing so. During the 1980s, this policy was called "the Reagan Doctrine." In some cases, America assisted freedom fighters around the world who were seeking to overthrow corrupt regimes, providing them with weaponry, training and intelligence. In other cases, the United States intervened directly. In still others, such as in Central and Eastern Europe, America supported peaceful opposition movements with moral, financial and covert assistance. In each case, it was America's intention to help bring down oppressive regimes. The dramatic expansion of freedom in the last decade of the twentieth century has been a direct result of these policies.

In none of these instances, however, did the United States ask for or receive the approval of the United Nations to "legitimize" its actions. And yet the secretary-general now declares that approval by the United Nations Security Council is the "sole source of legitimacy on the use of force" in the world. It is a fanciful notion that free peoples need to seek the approval of an international body (a quarter of whose members are totalitarian dictatorships, according to Freedom House's 1999/2000 *Freedom in the World*) to lend support to nations struggling to break the chains of tyranny. The United Nations has no power to grant or decline legitimacy to such actions. They are *inherently* legitimate.

What the United Nations can do is help. The Security Council can, where appropriate, be an instrument to facilitate action by "coalitions of the willing", it can

Jesse Helms (R-NC) is chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

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implement sanctions regimes, and it can provide logistical support to states undertaking collective action. As it stands, however, the Security Council has an exceedingly mixed record in being such a facilitator. In the case of Iraq's aggression against Kuwait in the early 1990s, it performed admirably; in the more recent case of Kosovo, it was paralyzed. The initial UN peacekeeping mission in Bosnia was a disaster, and its failure to protect the Bosnian people from Serb depredations is well documented in a recent report issued by the UN itself.[1] And, despite its initial success in repelling Iraqi aggression, in the years since the Gulf War the Security Council has utterly failed to stop Saddam Hussein's drive to build instruments of mass murder. It has repeatedly allowed him to play a game of expelling UNSCOM inspection teams, and has left him completely free for the past two years to fashion nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction.

The American people will never accept the secretary-general's claim that the United Nations is the "sole source of legitimacy on the use of force" in the world. True, the U.S. Senate ratified the UN Charter fifty years ago. Yet in so doing, America did not cede *one syllable* of its sovereignty to the United Nations. Under the American system, when international treaties are ratified they simply become domestic U.S. law. As such, they carry no greater or lesser weight than any other domestic U.S. law. Treaty obligations can be superseded by a simple act of Congress. This was the intentional design of America's Founding Fathers, who cautioned against entering into "entangling alliances." This is why Americans look with alarm upon the UN's claim to a monopoly on international moral legitimacy. They see this as a threat to the freedoms of the American people, a claim of political authority over America and its elected leaders.

The effort to establish a United Nations International Criminal Court (ICC) is a case in point. Consider: the Rome treaty purports to hold American citizens under its jurisdiction—even though the United States has neither signed nor ratified the treaty. Put another way, it claims sovereign authority over American citizens without their consent. The Court's supporters argue that Americans should be willing to sacrifice some of their sovereignty for the noble cause of international justice. This, frankly, is laughable. International law did not defeat Hitler, nor did it win the Cold War. What stopped the Nazi march across Europe, and the communist march across the world, was the principled projection of power by the world's great democracies. And that principled projection of force is the only thing that will ensure peace and security on the international scene in the future.

INDEED, more often than not, "international law" has been used as a make-believe justification for hindering the advance of freedom. When Ronald Reagan sent American servicemen to liberate Grenada from the hands of a communist dictatorship, the UN General Assembly responded by voting to condemn the action of the President of the United States as a violation of international law—and did so by a larger majority than that which condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Similarly, the U.S. effort to overthrow Nicaragua's communist dictatorship (by supporting the country's freedom fighters and mining its harbors) was declared by the World Court to be a violation of international law. Most recently, we learned that the chief prosecutor of the Yugoslav war

[1] "Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to the General Assembly Res. 53-35 of November 1998: The Fall of Srebrenica", November 15, 1999.

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crimes tribunal, Carla del Ponte of Switzerland, conducted an eleven-month investigation of alleged NATO war crimes during the Kosovo campaign. She declared that it is fully within the scope of her authority to indict NATO pilots and commanders. In the end, she chose not to prosecute President Clinton or NATO commanders and servicemen, but the very fact that she entertained the idea brings to light all that is wrong with the UN's conception of global justice, which proposes a system in which independent prosecutors and judges, answering to no state or institution, wield unfettered power to sit in judgment of the foreign policy decisions of Western democracies.

No UN institution—not the Security Council, not the Yugoslav tribunal, not a future ICC—is competent to judge the foreign policy and national security decisions of the United States. American courts themselves routinely refuse cases where they are asked to sit in judgment of our government's national security decisions, stating that they are not competent for the task. Why would Americans submit such matters to the judgment of an International Criminal Court, comprised of mostly foreign judges elected by an international body made up of the membership of the UN General Assembly?

Americans distrust concepts like the International Criminal Court and claims by the UN to be the "sole source of legitimacy on the use of force", because we have a profound distrust of accumulated power. Our Founding Fathers created a government founded on the dispersal of power and a system of checks and balances. In his 1962 classic, *Capitalism and Freedom*, the Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman rightly declared,

> Government power must be dispersed. If government is to exercise power, better in the county than in the state, better in the state than in Washington. [Because] if I do not like what my local community does, I can move to another local community . . . [and] if I do not like what my state does, I can move to another. [But] if I do not like what Washington imposes, I have few alternatives in this world of jealous nations.

Today, as the UN seeks to impose its utopian vision of "international law" on Americans, we can add this question: Where do we go when we do not like the impositions of the world? Today, while America's friends in Europe cede more and more power to supranational institutions like the European Union, Americans are heading in precisely the opposite direction. The United States is in a process of reducing centralized power by taking more and more authority that has been amassed by the federal government and delegating it to the individual states, where it rightly belongs. There is only one source of legitimacy of the U.S. government's policies—and that is the consent of the American people.

IF THE United Nations is to survive into the twenty-first century, it must recognize its limitations. The demands of the United States have not changed much since Henry Cabot Lodge laid out a set of conditions for joining the League of Nations eighty years ago: We want to ensure that the United States of America remains the sole judge of its own internal affairs, that the United Nations is not allowed to restrict the individual rights of U.S. citizens, and that the United States retains sole authority over the deployment of U.S. forces around the world. This is what Americans ask of the United Nations; it is what Americans *expect* of the United Nations.

The American people know instinctively that the UN lives and breathes on the hard-earned money of U.S. taxpayers. According to the U.S. General Accounting

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Office, in 1999 the United States contributed a total of more than $1.4 billion to the UN system in assessments and voluntary contributions. That is pretty generous, but it is only the tip of the iceberg. American taxpayers also spent about $8.8 billion of the U.S. military budget to support various UN resolutions and peacekeeping operations around the world. Thus the United States spent over $10 billion in one year alone to support the work of the United Nations. No other nation on earth comes close to matching that singular investment.

The money America spends on the UN is not charity. On the contrary, it is an investment—an investment from which the American people rightly expect a return. They expect a reformed UN that respects the sovereignty of the United States. The American people want the UN to serve the purposes for which it was designed: to help sovereign states coordinate collective action by "coalitions of the willing" (where the political will for such action exists); to provide a forum where diplomats can meet and keep open channels of communication in times of crisis; to provide to the peoples of the world important services, such as peacekeeping, weapons inspections and humanitarian relief.

This is important work. It is the core of what the UN can offer to the United States and the world. If, in the coming century, the UN focuses on doing these core tasks well, it can thrive and deservedly earn the support of the American people. But if the UN seeks to move beyond these tasks, if it seeks to impose its presumed power and authority over nation-states, I guarantee that it will meet stiff resistance from the American people.

Today, many Americans sense that the UN entertains greater ambitions than the efficient delivery of humanitarian aid, more effective peacekeeping, better weapons inspection, and the enhancement of great power diplomacy. They conclude from the secretary-general's declarations that the UN believes that only it can grant legitimacy to the use of force, and from the efforts to impose the ICC on America that the UN aspires to establish itself as the central moral authority of a new international order. It is an order the American people will not countenance. If the United Nations does not respect American sovereignty, if it seeks to impose its presumed authority over the American people without their consent, then it begs for confrontation and, more important, eventual U.S. withdrawal. □

War appears to be as old as mankind, but peace is a modern invention.

—Sir Henry Maine

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The Rocky Shoals of International Law

David B. Rivkin, Jr., and Lee A. Casey

ALTHOUGH international law has always been a consideration for American foreign policymakers, it has rarely commanded the focus of their attentions. Under the next president, this will have to change. Since the Cold War's end, a number of international organizations, human rights activists and states have worked to transform the traditional law of nations governing the relationship between states into something akin to an international regulatory code. This "new" international law purports to govern the relationship of citizens to their governments, affecting such domestic issues as environmental protection and the rights of children. Among other things, it would: nearly eliminate the unilateral use of military force; create the unattainable requirement of avoiding all civilian casualties in combat; promote the criminal prosecution of individual state officials by the courts of other states and international tribunals; and permit—or even require—international "humanitarian" intervention in a state's internal affairs. Recast as such, international law constitutes a real and immediate threat to U.S. national interests.

David B. Rivkin, Jr., and Lee A. Casey are partners in the law firm of Baker & Hostetler LLP. Both have practiced before the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

The impetus for extending the reach of international law stems from both our allies and our adversaries, who have chosen to use it as a means to check, or at least harness, American power. While each group has different strategic goals, from the perspective of both, the great "problem" of international affairs in the post-Cold War world is the unchallenged military, diplomatic, economic and even cultural predominance of the United States.[1] Our global antagonists, particularly China, would like to see the United States disengage from world affairs. For our allies, who continue to depend far too much on U.S. military might to wish for a new American isolationism, the great danger has become American "unilateralism"—an all-purpose term for U.S. action not sanctioned by the "international community." They do not want to prevent U.S. global engagement; they want to influence and control it.

Both our allies and our adversaries understand the value of international law in achieving their ends. Law and its rhetoric have always played a far more important role in the United States than in almost any other country. We are a nation bound together not by ties of

[1]The State Department's Office of Media Reaction publishes analyses of foreign elite opinions that reveal a widespread preoccupation with alleged American "hegemony."

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blood or religion, but by paper and ink. The Declaration of Independence itself was, at its heart, an appeal to law—the laws of nature and of nature's God—to justify an act of rebellion against the British Crown. As Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in the early days of the American republic:

> [t]he influence of legal habits [in the United States] extends beyond the precise limits I have pointed out. Scarcely any political question arises in the United States that is not resolved, sooner or later, into a judicial question. Hence all parties are obliged to borrow, in their daily controversies, the ideas, and even the language, peculiar to judicial proceedings.[2]

Tocqueville was clearly prescient. Today almost every key policy issue in the United States is framed as a legal question. Law is our genius and our Achilles' Heel. If the trends of international law in the 1990s are allowed to mature into binding rules, international law may prove to be one of the most potent weapons ever deployed against the United States.

The good news is that international law, properly configured, should not be viewed as a burden for our foreign policy. Rather, it can function as a positive force, capable of promoting a more stable international environment and advancing our national interest. As the world's pre-eminent power, we have both the greatest opportunity and the most pressing need to shape international law. To do so successfully in the years ahead, though, will require a keen appreciation of how international law evolved over time and of what specific legal problems have confronted American foreign and defense policy over the last decade. Moreover, international law imperatives will have to be integrated into American statecraft. For just as war is too important to be left to the generals, international law cannot be left solely to the lawyers.

The Assault on the Westphalian Order

THE CURRENT international order, in which the most important actor is the independent nation-state, dates from the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, which ended Europe's religious wars. Traditional international law, better described as the "law of nations", was built around this system. It was defined in 1758 by one of its early scholars, Emerich de Vattel, as "the science of the law subsisting between nations or states, and of the obligations that flow from it."

This law developed over time, primarily by the actual practice of states interacting with one another, and had little, if anything, to do with the relationship between citizens and their own governments. For this reason, the law of nations accommodated widely divergent domestic political systems, ranging from absolute monarchies to authoritarian and totalitarian regimes to democracies. It was not, moreover, enforceable through any regular legal or judicial process, but only by political means—up to and including war. In this manner, international law, which lacked the legitimacy enjoyed by law made by an elected and accountable legislative body, was fully compatible with the principles of self-government upon which the American republic was founded. Indeed, the Constitution itself recognizes the existence of the law of nations, and specifically gives Congress the authority to define offenses against that law.

In the aftermath of World War II, however, attempts to impose limitations on states through international legal stric-

[2]Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: Knopf, 1951), vol. 1, p. 280.

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tures gained a new currency. The murderous policies of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan prompted renewed international efforts to leash the dogs of war and, even more broadly, to impose a range of duties and obligations on sovereign governments. These endeavors involved not only limiting—through the UN Charter—the right of states to use force against other states, but also sought both to regulate the relationships between national governments and their citizens and to create tangible enforcement mechanisms, other than the use of raw political or military force. Thus, the conceptual foundation for the new international law was in place by the late 1940s. Because of Cold War imperatives, however, these efforts produced little effect in the way states actually behaved.

With the end of the Cold War things have changed. Activists, scholars, international institutions like the United Nations, and even a number of governments (including, episodically at least, the Clinton administration) have redoubled their efforts, championing a new international legal order by which states are subject to the will of the elusive "international community" at large. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been the leading force in this process. They have been particularly active in promoting the adoption of international treaties and conventions, including the Rome treaty (which established the new permanent International Criminal Court, or ICC), the Land Mines Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

NGOs have also worked to steer and hasten the evolution of customary international law, an area where traditionally only state practice gave rise, at a rather glacial pace, to the emergence of legal norms. Now customs seem to be spawned overnight, through nothing more tangible than the convening of scholarly conferences or the publication of papers. Significantly, it is now alleged that states do not have any choice in deciding whether to comply with these newly minted international law norms. The NGOs have been arguing that they are able to represent public aspirations at both the national and global levels—that is, to speak for the (nonexistent) "global civil society"—better than any government. While these claims are quite obviously false—NGOs are not elected, not accountable to any body politic, and are not inherently better or worse than other special interests—such groups have had considerable success in shaping the new international law. These groups were omnipresent during the 1998 Rome Conference, which adopted the ICC treaty, and actually achieved mention as vessels of the "public conscience" in the Land Mines Convention.

The substantive body of the new international law that these groups have sponsored has a number of specific manifestations, not all of them entirely consistent with each other. These include claims that heretofore purely domestic public policy issues—such as the death penalty, abortion, gay rights, environmental protection, and the relationship between parents and children—must be resolved in accordance with "prevailing" international standards; that, with the possible exception of repelling armed attack, only the United Nations Security Council can authorize the use of military force; that the "international community" is entitled to intervene under a variety of circumstances in the internal affairs of states; and that the actions of individual civilian and military officials of states fall under the purview of international criminal jurisdiction.

At the core of these efforts is a frontal assault on sovereignty as the organizing principle of the international system. Proponents of the new order are not shy about saying so. Among the new interna-

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tional law's strongest supporters is Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who has plainly stated,

> Great nations who understand the importance of sovereignty at various times cede various portions of it in order to achieve some better good for their country. We are looking at how the nation-state functions in a totally different way than people did at the beginning of this century.[3]

The Threat to the United States

ALTHOUGH THE Clinton administration has been generally supportive of the new international law, its key tenets create problems of the highest order for the United States. First, as a philosophical matter, any attack upon the principle of sovereignty threatens the very foundation of American democracy. Sovereignty is the necessary predicate of self-government. As Vattel wrote, a "sovereign State" is one that "governs itself, under what form so ever." Any limitation on sovereignty as an organizing principle, any "cession", to paraphrase Secretary Albright, is an abdication of the right of the citizens of the United States to be governed solely in accordance with their Constitution, and by individuals whom they have elected and who are ultimately accountable to them. To the extent that international law allows supranational, or extra-national, institutions to determine whether the actions of the United States are lawful, ultimate authority will no longer be vested in the American people, but in these institutions.

Thus, for all of its humanitarian and democracy-building rhetoric, the new international law is profoundly undemocratic at its core. Indeed, with its lack of accountability and disdain for democratic practice (as opposed to rhetoric), it arguably poses the greatest challenge to Francis Fukuyama's anticipated global triumph of liberal democracy. If the aspirations of today's international law proponents were ever to prevail, the resulting international system would not remotely resemble a community of democratic nations.

Second, as a practical matter, the new international law has the potential to undermine American leadership in the post-Cold War global system. Even more fundamentally, international law may well make the world safe for aggression, by imposing undue constraints on those countries that are willing to use force to deter and punish it. Although, as noted above, the new international law has a number of manifestations, those elements dealing with the use of military force, and the potential consequences for individual American officials who order or implement its use, are the most advanced and pernicious. As the world's pre-eminent military power, with global interests and responsibilities, the United States should be very concerned about any effort to create international judicial institutions capable of prosecuting individual soldiers, officers and elected officials in the chain of command.

The international criminal "norms" applied in these courts, both in the *ad hoc* criminal courts for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda and in the International Criminal Court, are ambiguous in their meaning and remarkably fluid in their application. For example, one of the "war crimes" prosecutable in the ICC is defined as

> [i]ntentionally launching an attack in the knowledge that such attack will cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects or widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environ-

[3]Quoted in Charles Trueheart, *Washington Post*, February 23, 1999.

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ment which would be clearly excessive in relation to the concrete and direct overall military advantage anticipated.

Whether any particular attack causes "excessive" civilian injuries or environmental damage is very much a matter of opinion.

This is, in fact, a crime that can be tailored to fit almost any circumstances, as was all but openly acknowledged by the prosecutor's office of the Yugoslav tribunal during its investigation of alleged NATO war crimes. This investigation was undertaken after a number of NGOs complained that NATO's 1999 air campaign against Serbia resulted in too many civilian deaths. As candidly noted in the report to the prosecutor,

> [t]he answers to these questions [regarding allegedly excessive civilian casualties] are not simple. It may be necessary to resolve them on a case by case basis, and the answers may differ depending on the background and values of the decision-maker. It is unlikely that a human rights lawyer and an experienced combat commander would assign the same relative values to military advantage and to injury to noncombatants. Further, it is unlikely that military commanders with different doctrinal backgrounds and differing degrees of combat experience or national military histories would always agree in close cases.[4]

The key underlying problem here is that injuries to noncombatants and their property—so-called "collateral damage"—are an endemic consequence of combat. As a result, the traditional law of war, *jus in bello*, although proscribing certain hostile actions toward civilians, eschewed overly rigid rules on collateral damage. Unfortunately, instead of continuing to rely on the broad, traditional *jus in bello* principles of proportionality and discrimination, the new norms have come to resemble American domestic regulatory law. These rules are overly prescriptive and proscriptive, to such an extent that ensuring full compliance has become almost impossible. This is particularly the case because the new international law seems to suggest that zero civilian casualties and no collateral damage are not only attainable outcomes in modern combat, but that these should be the norm. The combination of the unrealistic norms and unaccountable judicial bodies that would apply them is particularly problematic.

The American military is particularly vulnerable here. This is because U.S. military doctrine has always been attrition-oriented, emphasizing the intensive application of firepower and the use of "decisive force." It is inevitable that damage to civilian sites, and civilian casualties, will result. This is all the more likely given the growing American aversion to combat casualties, which forces our military commanders to rely more and more on air strikes and missile attacks. This raises the real possibility that American soldiers and officials will be considered subject to prosecution, even in situations where the intervention has been "humanitarian" in character, as with the air campaign against Serbia.

Significantly, while no prosecutions against NATO officials are currently planned, even the relatively tame Yugoslav tribunal did not give the alliance a clean bill of health. Indeed, the prosecutor's office declined to bring indictments, not because it concluded that no crimes were committed by NATO, but because "[i]n all cases, either the law is not sufficiently clear or investigations are unlikely to result in the acquisition of sufficient evidence to substantiate charges against high level accused or against lower accused for particularly heinous offenses." Future out-

[4]Final Report to the Prosecutor by the Committee Established to Review NATO Bombing Campaign Against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, para. 50 (released June 13, 2000).

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comes in the permanent ICC, a court that will be less dependent upon U.S. and NATO largesse than is the Yugoslav tribunal, may be very different. And the fact that the United States has not signed, and would not ratify, the ICC treaty will not prevent the ICC from pursuing Americans. The court claims to exercise a form of "universal jurisdiction" that will allow it to prosecute American citizens when their actions, or the effects of their actions, take place on the territory of a state that has signed the ICC treaty.

Moreover, the danger here is not limited to the potential actions of the ICC. Based on the "universal jurisdiction" theory—which suggests that any state can prosecute international humanitarian violations wherever they occur, whether or not that state's own citizens are involved—any state, or even a low-level foreign magistrate, can begin a prosecution against American military or civilian officials. This was, of course, the case with the former Chilean dictator, Augusto Pinochet, who traveled to England for medical treatment in 1998, and was very nearly extradited to Spain to stand trial for his actions during his rule in Chile.

Overall, there is no doubt that, insofar as they can successfully claim the right to prosecute military and civilian leaders for violations of the laws of war and international humanitarian norms, international judicial bodies and interested states will be able effectively to shape American policy. An American president would be far less likely to use force if there were a genuine possibility that U.S. soldiers or officials, including himself, would face future prosecution in a foreign court. Both our allies and our adversaries fully understand the importance of molding the new international law to fit their needs, and its power as an effective weapon against the United States.

Examples of this phenomenon are not difficult to find. Human rights activists, of course, have frequently made exaggerated claims that pre-existing international humanitarian norms require fundamental changes in U.S. foreign and domestic policy. States are also increasingly using the language of law as a means of shaping U.S. policy. In one of the most boldly cynical examples of this phenomenon, the People's Republic of China—desperate to prevent American deployment of even a limited anti-ballistic missile defense—has asserted that the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union remains in force (even though the Soviet Union disappeared a decade ago), and that it cannot be terminated by the United States because that treaty has assumed the status of "customary" international law.

Opportunities for the United States

ALL OF THESE problems have led many conservatives, always skeptical of international law because of its ambiguous and supranational character, to reject it as law at all. Most notably, the dean of conservative constitutional lawyers, Robert Bork, has forcefully argued in these pages that even traditional international law is simply too indeterminate in its application and too subject to "non-legal"—i.e., political and diplomatic—criteria to be considered law. He also has attacked international law at a much more fundamental level, noting that the lack of any elected and accountable international lawmaking body deprives international law of the legitimacy inherently possessed by domestic law. As Judge Bork pointed out ten years ago, "There can be no authentic rule of law among nations until nations have a common political morality or are under a common sovereignty."[5]

[5]Bork, "The Limits of 'International Law'", *The National Interest* (Winter 1989/90), p. 10.

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On the facts, the conservative critics of international law are mostly right. Even traditional international law was not made by an elected, accountable legislature; was often ambiguous to the point of being unknowable; was not enforceable by regular judicial processes; and accorded totalitarian dictatorships the same legal status as democratic republics. But an unfair, unbalanced or nakedly political application of the law does not necessarily undermine its force and effect as law. Domestic examples of these faults are plentiful. Moreover, to the extent that international law, to be considered legitimate and effective, is expected to meet the standards that must be met by domestic law, it will necessarily fail.

It does not follow, however, that international law does not exist, or that the "rule of law" among nations is impossible, short of global governance. In fact, it is only when international law is expected to serve as the equivalent of domestic law, but on a global basis, that it appears ambiguous, ineffectual and illegitimate. And it is only comparatively recently that it has been expected to meet those standards—a task for which it is, and always has been, singularly ill-equipped. Nevertheless, international law does exist, and the United States, like other sovereigns, is bound by it. This much was fully recognized and accepted by the Founders of our Republic and the framers of the Constitution.

However, the United States is not required to accept the new international law, and would be foolish to do so. Rather, we should actively work to shape international law in ways that both support our national interests and that are consistent with our philosophical foundations. In this, we would simply be following the examples of other great powers, past and present, which have understood the importance and value of a favorable international legal system. An excellent example of such behavior is provided by the efforts of the great seventeenth and eighteenth-century maritime powers, Britain and the Dutch Republic, to mold the principle of "freedom of the seas" to their commercial and naval needs. As its dependence on maritime trade increased, the Dutch Republic argued for the broadest principle of free navigation—especially after its naval supremacy gave way to that of Britain. On the other hand, Britain's support for this international norm ebbed and flowed with its need to impose successful naval blockades on Continental aggressors, specifically, France and Germany.

The Restoration of International Law

TO IMPLEMENT this active and national interest-driven approach to the development of international law would mean a significant change in the way American foreign policy is made. Restoring the "law of nations" must be one of the next president's most important priorities. To achieve this end, the new administration must consciously coordinate foreign policy and international law imperatives. The rules of international law are significantly affected by state practice. A state that consistently takes a particular position on the content or meaning of international law, and that acts commensurate with that position, can have a very important impact on the law's development. We need, in short, to approach the current problems posed by international law holistically, rather than one issue at a time.

To begin with, an adroit American public diplomacy is very important. We need to articulate clearly and consistently why we embrace particular international legal stances. While the United States should not shy away from invoking its national interests as a motivating force for its actions, whenever possible it should

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articulate a broader set of compelling normative principles. In particular, the United States should strongly espouse national sovereignty, the bedrock upon which democracy and self-government are built, as the fundamental organizing principle of the international system. In that regard, we should make clear to our European allies that our understanding of national sovereignty and independence is simply different than their own.

Throughout its history, the United States has taken a strong view of its rights as an independent sovereign; such a view is essential to our constitutional form of government. By contrast, over the past fifty years, the European states have come to accept increasing limitations on their sovereign rights, to the point of permitting significant elements of their foreign and domestic policies to be formulated by the European Union's bureaucracy in Brussels, rather than by their own elected national legislatures. It may well be accurate to say that, at least in Europe, a new form of sovereignty has developed—although these developments have not been without significant opposition. As Jeremy Rabkin has aptly noted, "as the EU is not quite a State, it favors a world in which states are much less central to international society than they used to be."[6] Europe, however, is not the world.

In this regard, it is essential to explain the role of American exceptionalism and the heroic component in our national civic culture. Our European allies may well be able to accommodate their national aspirations within the context of the European Union, looking back to the universalism of the Middle Ages; but the United States cannot. It was not a part of Charlemagne's empire or of medieval Christendom. An American president can motivate the American people to undertake a global leadership role—a role that continues to be critical to Europe's security—only by invoking patriotism, idealism and the national interest.

This is particularly true when the use of American military force may be involved. Our allies should understand that doctrines denigrating patriotism and national sovereignty inherently promote American isolationism. It is simply impossible to engage the U.S. military on the basis of the imperatives of multilateral institutions alone.

On a more practical level, senior U.S. foreign policymakers need to anticipate and take account of the international law implications of each and every foreign policy decision. Although clear statements by U.S. officials rejecting the worst excesses of new trends in international law will be important, this will not be enough to protect U.S. interests. The United States should avoid any action, however meritorious it may appear at the time, that would undermine traditional international law principles. On those occasions when the national interest or basic morality requires a violation of these principles, we should justify this by reference to a greater good—not by embracing the insupportable "new" international law.

This is especially true with respect to the "right of humanitarian intervention." The Clinton administration adopted this "right" as a pretext to justify NATO's air war against Serbia, and the new administration may well be tempted to invoke it again to justify further U.S. intervention in Yugoslavia, Iraq or elsewhere. This temptation must be resisted. The "right of humanitarian intervention" has no basis in the traditional law of nations. It violates the United Nations Charter, which prohibits interference in the inter-

[6]Rabkin, "Is EU Policy Eroding the Sovereignty of Non-Member States?", paper presented to the American Enterprise Institute, April 4-5, 2000, p. 3.

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nal affairs of member states. It is, in fact, nothing more than nineteenth-century colonialism—this time dressed in the language of law rather than of "progress" or the "white man's burden."

If the "right of humanitarian intervention" were established as a norm of international law, there would be neither limits to it nor means to support its neutral application. This fact surely has not been lost on weaker states that do not meet Western standards of democracy. Ultimately, the "right of humanitarian intervention" is not likely to produce a more just and safe world, but to impel vulnerable states to obtain weapons of mass destruction as a means of preventing Western intervention in their internal affairs. It is, of course, true that any sort of intervention by the United States and its allies fuels this particular fire. However, championing a new international law norm that permits, or even requires, humanitarian intervention suggests a much more immediate threat to these regimes. It implies that such intervention will be the rule rather than the exception. In a world where the designs for nuclear weaponry can be obtained on the Internet, this is not wise statecraft.

A better approach to dealing with "rogue" regimes would be to follow the traditional rules of international law. These permit self-defense, that is, action by a state against another that is threatening its national interests—a right that was fully incorporated into the United Nations Charter. The traditional rules give rogue regimes less reason to develop weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, they still permit significant scope for U.S. action. For example, if the next administration were to conclude that Saddam Hussein must finally be removed from power, it could avoid basing its action on a "right of humanitarian intervention" by recognizing an alternative Iraqi government and providing assistance in removing the dictator. A similar approach could have been employed against Milosevic.

In any case, when addressing international law issues, the United States should be consistent. It should only promote international law norms *that it is prepared to obey*. The Clinton administration's attempt to establish a "new" form of sovereignty, along with a "right of humanitarian intervention" and "international courts" to prosecute war crimes, arguably serves to some extent its foreign policy imperatives. However, these rules clearly would not be acceptable to the United States if they were applied to its own nationals or policies. Indeed, this was already clear when the Clinton administration found itself complaining bitterly about the inquiries of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia into NATO's Serbia campaign. That being the case, the United States should not have supported the creation of the Yugoslav tribunal in the first place.

Similarly, the United States was an early supporter of the permanent ICC. The Clinton administration's open enthusiasm for the project evidently led our negotiating partners to believe that the United States would ultimately sign the Rome treaty, even if all U.S. objectives were not achieved—in particular, guarantees that U.S. soldiers and officials could not be prosecuted without prior U.S. approval. In the end, when these guarantees could not be obtained, the American delegation (properly) refused to sign the Rome treaty and was left isolated from its allies.

This is an excellent example of how not to conduct U.S. foreign policy. An early and honest statement, for example, that the uniqueness of the U.S. Constitution and the long American tradition of independence precluded the subjection of American nationals to the

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ICC's authority would have better served the national interest and our international reputation. Moreover, a frank acknowledgment of this fact might well have undermined the ICC project in its early stages, avoiding the creation of a court that will automatically claim jurisdiction over American nationals. The only option now, of course, is to oppose vigorously the court's actual operations.

The United States must also oppose the increasingly exaggerated claims made in the name of the principle of "universal jurisdiction." Indeed, this new element of international law, which was invoked in an effort to extradite Augusto Pinochet to Spain, may be the most pernicious. The universal jurisdiction principle often is mistakenly traced to the Nuremberg trials. In fact, the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg did not claim to exercise "universal jurisdiction" over the Nazi leadership. It instead justified its authority on the sovereign power of the conquered German state: namely, "the exercise of the sovereign legislative power [of Germany] by the countries to which the German Reich unconditionally surrendered; and the undoubted right of these countries to legislate for the occupied territories."[7] Under the traditional law of nations, universal jurisdiction is a narrow proposition, permitting all states to criminalize actions—like piracy—injurious to all and occurring outside the territory of any one state.

As expounded today, however, universal jurisdiction would permit the courts of any state to prosecute and punish the leadership of any other state for violations of international humanitarian norms. In this regard, the rule's proponents should keep in mind that any independent state, not just "right thinking" Western ones, would be entitled to prosecute such "violations" on a universal jurisdiction approach. Most recently, the courts of Yugoslavia tried (*in absentia*) and convicted the NATO leaders responsible for the spring 1999 air campaign against Serbia for crimes against humanity. (President Clinton was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment.) This proceeding was obviously absurd. Yet, legally, it was just as "legitimate" as Spain's attempt to prosecute Pinochet.

AS AN ALTERNATIVE to expansive universal jurisdiction and the ICC, the United States should promote a renewed commitment to the prosecution of "international" crimes in national judicial systems. Under the traditional rules of international law, some national court system almost always has jurisdiction, either on the basis of territoriality (the country where the crime took place) or nationality (the citizenship of the accused), over crimes against the law of nations. For crimes committed beyond the borders of any state, the traditional universal jurisdiction principle would be available.

This solution, often derided by international humanitarian activists who are impatient with the whole notion of national sovereignty, shows real promise. Although states are often reluctant to prosecute their own nationals, concerted international pressure has produced results. For example, the Cambodian government is moving, albeit slowly, toward establishing a domestic tribunal to investigate and prosecute the crimes of the Khmer Rouge, and Libya was ultimately forced to surrender the individuals responsible for the terrorist attack on Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. The Lockerbie case also demonstrates the potential flexibility of the "national" solution: the court that is trying the Lockerbie defendants has been convened

[7]The Nuremberg Trial, *Federal Rules Decisions* (1946), vol. 6, p. 107.

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in the Netherlands, but will apply the law of Scotland—the territory where the crime took place. Finally, in cases where the territory upon which the criminal acts took place has been militarily occupied (as in Kosovo), the Nuremberg model (courts established by the occupying or administering power) may be used.

At the same time, to make U.S. opposition to the ICC and to the expansion of universal jurisdiction more credible, the next president should seriously reconsider several attempts to subject foreign nationals to U.S. law. The enforcement of U.S. antitrust laws against foreign corporations is deeply resented in Europe and elsewhere. In addition, over the past decade the federal courts have increasingly entertained lawsuits, brought by U.S. citizens and foreign nations, arising out of acts taken in foreign countries by government officials and private citizens. These suits, brought under the 1789 Alien Tort Claims Act (which was originally passed to enable Americans to seek redress for piracy), have become vehicles for judicial examination of the internal policies of foreign states. Even the *Washington Post* argued, in an August 12 editorial, that this

> carries real dangers. The court system is designed to resolve disputes between people over whom the courts are actually capable of exercising authority. Here they are being used instead to convey moral messages and purvey essentially advisory opinions on questions of international human rights and foreign relations—not the courts' traditional province.

Along these same lines, Congress should temper its exuberance in allowing U.S. courts to consider claims brought by American nationals regarding terrorist acts overseas. Over the last few years, Congress has overturned the traditional principles of sovereign immunity, amending the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act to permit civil suits against certain foreign countries (Iran, Syria, Libya, Iraq, North Korea, Sudan and Cuba) designated by the State Department as sponsors of terrorism against U.S. citizens. Under traditional legal principles, such foreign countries may be considered to have committed an act of war against the United States, entitling us to strike back at them or to bring a lawsuit at the International Court of Justice. It is not at all clear that converting an act of war into a subject for a civil suit, which can be brought by private litigants, is either good law or good foreign policy. A U.S. strategy of prompt reprisals against countries sponsoring terrorism—fully permissible under the traditional law of nations—should offer much more effective means of both deterring and punishing terrorism.

The restoration of the law of nations to its rightful place is an essential task for the next president. Accomplishing this goal will require a clear vision, sound public diplomacy, and a serious commitment to the rule of law in our international practices. Its realization would bolster American statecraft, enhance our global leadership position, and create a secure and prosperous international environment for the United States in the twenty-first century. □

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Colombia: *Crossing a Dangerous Threshold*

Brian Michael Jenkins

ALTHOUGH THE United States has been involved deeply in Colombia's internal affairs for some time, we stand now on the threshold of a momentous change in the nature of that involvement. This has provoked intense, if not always edifying, debate. Perhaps it is inevitable in this case, as in all public discussions, that complex issues are reduced to a single, simple question: Should the United States provide Colombia with sixty helicopters, including thirty sophisticated Black Hawks, to enable its army to attack remote cocaine refineries and, perhaps, persuade its guerrillas to negotiate? But in focusing on aircraft, there is a danger that Colombia's complex political landscape will be reduced to mere background scenery.

"La Violencia"

COLOMBIANS refer to one of the bloodier periods of their bloody twentieth century as *La Violencia*—the Violence—as if the violence were not a consequence of Colombia's political conflicts or culture, but rather a malevolent, independent actor. Violence in Colombia sometimes does seem to be a Goya-etched monster whose appetite for corpses cannot be sated or suppressed. Neither repeated efforts to negotiate settlements among the warring parties nor mere weariness of the bloodshed can end it. Colombia's scholars probe its pathology. National commissions are appointed to examine it. Creative and complicated political contraptions are devised to contain it. But there is no simple or single explanation for it and, so far, no redemption from it.

Colombia confronts a host of Marxist guerrillas, private armies, criminal gangs and hired guns. The current guerrilla wars have killed an estimated 35,000 people. In the last few years, the paramilitaries have accounted for a growing share of this violence. These are private militias, initially organized as self-defense units and financed by landowners, that have worked with Colombia's army to destroy the guerrillas and their supporters. The paramilitaries appear, however, to be evolving into more autonomous actors, financing themselves through drug trafficking, cooperating with government security forces where convenient, but pursuing their own economic and political goals.

The bulk of the violence is not related to politics or to drugs. *Sicarios*, young hoodlums who can be hired to murder for a few pesos, along with ordinary people steeped in Colombia's violent culture, do most of the killing. They have made Colombia one of the most violent countries in the world. In addition to those

Brian Michael Jenkins is an analyst of political violence and international crime.

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killed in the guerrilla wars, approximately 30,000 people are murdered each year, giving Colombia an annual homicide rate of nearly 100 per 100,000. To get an idea of its national impact, applying Colombia's murder rate to the U.S. population would make a quarter million murders a year—year after year. Almost every Colombian has been personally touched by the violence. Since fewer than 15 percent of deaths can be attributed to the guerrilla fighting, ending those wars and reining in the paramilitaries would still leave Colombia a very violent place, even if all the factions and fronts put down their guns.

To the murders and the guerrilla war killings add the kidnappings, which in Colombia have reached industrial scale. In 1982, 19 kidnappings were reported in the country. Today the number reported each year runs into the thousands, and some estimate the unreported total to be much higher still. The fortunate ones are ransomed. The remainder are killed, or at least never reappear. Ransoms provide a major source of revenue for the guerrillas. Everybody with money who does not pay for protection is a target, and nearly every family of means has at least one member who has been held hostage. Drug-financed private death squads called "Death to Kidnappers" were created in reaction to the guerrillas, but they expanded their operations to target left-wing supporters and other persons regarded as troublesome by the traffickers-turned-conservative landlords. Criminal gangs also engage in kidnappings, as on occasion the drug traffickers themselves have done. When he was running for mayor of Bogotá, Colombia's current president, Andres Pastrana, himself was kidnapped and held for a week by the "Extraditables", a name adopted by drug lords facing extradition.

Amazingly, until recently this degree of violence has not prevented political, social and economic progress in Colombia. Colombia's democratic institutions remain intact; its new constitution decentralizes power and brings more people into the political process than ever before. Its literacy rate is one of the highest in Latin America, while its forty universities are full. An impressive number of women are enrolled in higher education and serve in public office. Colombian businessmen are entrepreneurial and competitive. Colombia has the fourth-largest economy in Latin America and is the only country in the region never to have defaulted on its debt. There almost seem to be two Colombias: a sophisticated South American Milan attached to a brutal South American Congo.

Lately, however, the violence has begun to undermine the progressive Colombia. It has discouraged investment and impeded the country's economic development. Two million people have been displaced, while 800,000 have fled. Government resources have been drained. The 1997 Asian economic crisis dried up money and knocked Colombia into its worst recession since the 1930s. This is the wider background against which the civil war must be viewed.

The Guerrilla Forces

ARRAYED AGAINST the Colombian armed forces in the struggle in which the United States seems about to involve itself are the 17,000 Marxist guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the 5,000 fighters of the National Liberation Army (ELN). The FARC has been fighting for nearly forty years, but its origins reach back to the veterans of the armed movements of the 1950s and to the political warfare of the 1940s. Manuel Marulanda, the leader of the FARC, began his career as a gunman for the Liberal Party after his mother had

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been shot by Conservative Party gunmen. He was only 15. The year was 1941.

The guerrillas mainly survive in the remote areas of the country where the government has never been able to establish its authority. In these remote areas, the FARC is not merely a guerrilla movement, but a guerrilla subculture. We know very little about this other "society." Indeed, beyond estimates of strength and order of battle information, one is struck by the poor quality of intelligence about the guerrillas. They remain numbers on briefing charts, blobs on maps.

The guerrillas' cash flow has improved with increased kidnappings and involvement in drug trafficking. Various estimates place their total income at somewhere between $300 million and $900 million a year. Between $170 million and $500 million comes from taxing coca production, the rest from extortion and ransoms. Finances are important. The guerrilla organizations and the opposing militias have become competing economic enterprises. Even allowing for the highest estimates of the costs of supporting a guerrilla in the field, the estimated cash flows suggest that these non-government armies operate at a profit. That enables them to corrupt officials and purchase weapons. It also gives them a powerful incentive to maintain their exclusive control of territory.

The money has facilitated the expansion of the guerrilla forces and enabled the FARC to field larger units and launch coordinated attacks. The fighting has moved beyond the hit-and-run attacks of traditional guerrilla warfare into mobile warfare involving larger-scale battles, although recent successes by government forces have to some extent forced the guerrillas to revert to traditional tactics. They cannot "take" Bogotá or seize other cities; they would be destroyed in a pitched battle with the army. And Colombia's political parties know (or used to know) how to mobilize and fight. Urban offensives by the guerrillas are likely to be limited to brief raids and terrorist campaigns.

Despite their apparent transformation into criminal enterprises that live off kidnappings and the drug trade, tarnishing their reputation as revolutionaries, the guerrillas maintain a degree of legitimacy in the eyes of many Colombians: naturally in the areas where they are the only authority, but also among the dispossessed, the landless, the marginalized, left-wing romanticists and even, and most tellingly, among the general population. Although President Pastrana claims that 95 percent of the people believe in democracy and the rule of law, according to a public opinion poll, Marulanda is

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more trusted than any other political figure in the country, a cynical commentary on the credibility of Colombia's politicians. The guerrillas' claim to legitimacy reflects a fundamental failure of Colombia's political system to address the deep-rooted problems of rural and urban poverty, land reform, injustice and the rigid class structure, which account for the country's partition into haves and have-nots.

One cannot be overly optimistic about peace negotiations with a guerrilla army that has been in the field for forty years, is well funded and popular, and is led by a man who started fighting when Franklin Roosevelt was president of the United States. The Colombian government's current peace initiative is the latest in a series of unsuccessful attempts to end the conflicts. After seizing power in 1953, the government of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla offered a generous amnesty and promises of economic assistance to those guerrillas (then mostly from the left-wing of the Liberal Party) who turned in their weapons. Some 6,500 took advantage of the offer, but within twelve months, the communists within the Liberal Party slipped away to build strongholds in the mountains, and a new guerrilla war began. When Rojas Pinilla was forced to resign in 1957, the newly elected government of Alberto Lleras Camargo offered the guerrillas a new amnesty and assistance. This time there were few takers.

In the early 1960s, finding inspiration and encouragement from the Cuban Revolution, new guerrilla movements appeared in Colombia. These did not replace but operated alongside the older, established Marxist guerrillas of the 1950s, who were consolidating their control over remote areas of the country, creating a parallel government in what had become virtually "independent republics." Manuel Marulanda commanded the "republic" of Marquetalia in the Central Andes. A huge government military offensive in 1964 recovered Marquetalia, but the guerrilla leaders escaped the net to create the FARC. Two other Marxist guerrilla groups—the (Castroite) ELN and the (Maoist) People's Liberation Army—also took the field.

Belisario Betancur, who took office in 1982, completely rejected a military solution to the guerrilla problem and launched an ambitious peace effort. He offered combatants the most generous amnesty ever. His was a genuine attempt, made in good faith, to persuade at least some of the guerrillas to lay down their arms. Less optimistic Colombian officials expressed the hope that the amnesty would cause divisions within guerrilla ranks, thereby bringing, if not peace, some respite in the fighting. Skeptics saw it merely as an opportunity to insure greater public support for future government actions if the guerrillas rejected the offer. As one defense official told me in 1984, "If the guerrillas reject this amnesty, they lose all political pretensions. They show themselves to be *traficantes de violencia*, who, like traffickers of drugs, are pure criminals deserving no mercy."

President Betancur claimed that of the 6,000 or 7,000 guerrillas in the field, about a third had taken up the amnesty, but since the amnesty did not require the guerrillas to present themselves and formally renounce violence, there was no way of counting. A national police report indicated that only 1,089 guerrillas took advantage of the amnesty. Of these, 818 were members of M-19, a new movement that had emerged in the early 1970s, while, ominously, only 152 members of the FARC and 75 members of the ELN accepted the government's offer. In fact, far from abating, the fighting escalated and kidnappings soared. The minister of defense noted that one-fourth of all the soldiers killed in combat during the previ-

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ous twenty years died during the first two years of Betancur's peace initiative.

To further the peace process, the government negotiated a series of ceasefires with the guerrilla groups. These agreements, however, broke down under Betancur's successor, Virgilio Barco. Despite the ceasefires, the violence never actually stopped. Some of the guerrilla organizations, or hardline elements within them, continued fighting while anti-guerrilla gunmen initiated an assassination campaign against former guerrillas. Further peace efforts were undertaken by Barco's successors, but the fighting continued to escalate, complicated by the guerrilla's growing participation in the drug trade and the emergence of the paramilitaries. President Pastrana's current peace initiative is thus only the latest in a series of—up to now—failed efforts.

Washington's Intervention

THE U.S. government's planned assistance package to Colombia combines a legitimate effort to assist a beleaguered South American democracy with America's dubious strategy in its "war" on drugs. Cloaking efforts to reverse a deteriorating security situation in Colombia with talk about combating the drug trade is, presumably, a way of engaging an apathetic American public. But such political chicanery blurs our objectives and muddles our thinking. It is not surprising that, among Americans, there persists an appalling ignorance of Colombia's hellishly complicated realities. The vicious mix of guerrilla armies, private militias, drug traffic, deep-rooted corruption and endemic violence bewilders and dismays even many Colombians themselves.

Clearly, Colombia deserves U.S. assistance. A long-time ally of the United States, it has strategic importance in the hemisphere and is an important economic partner. Its democratic institutions have survived extraordinary stress. It is also the major source of the illegal drugs consumed here. American debates should put aside politically popular notions that defy evidence—including irrelevant comparisons with Vietnam—and focus instead on the important questions: What are our objectives in Colombia, and what is the best way to achieve them? Are we as a nation willing to stick to a commitment that will certainly exceed the $1.3 billion currently planned, and probably will take us far beyond the four-year parameter of Plan Colombia?

Increased involvement in Colombia's internal conflicts will intensify debate here about the U.S. strategy in the war on drugs. That in itself would not be a bad thing. If viewed as it has been billed—a measure to increase Colombia's capacity to suppress the drug trade—the planned assistance package represents a significant shift of drug war resources to source country control. Unfortunately, study after study has shown this to be the least effective way of reducing domestic drug consumption. Helicopters and crack battalions will project government power into now inaccessible areas, but it is naive at best to believe that this will suppress the supply of cocaine and heroin enough to reduce drug consumption in the United States by even a single user. In fact, despite considerable U.S. and Colombian efforts to date—including the controversial use of herbicides, which the plan will increase—coca cultivation in Colombia has significantly increased. If the paramount U.S. objective is reducing drug consumption, then clearly this is not the best way to spend $1.3 billion. Even if the objective is to reduce the financial base of the guerrillas and militias, we still might achieve more by shifting resources toward lowering demand, even though it may take years before the effects of

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falling consumption would seriously impact drug revenue.

The fact that U.S. assistance contributes to a counternarcotics plan prepared by the Colombian government should impress no one. Governments seeking foreign assistance always depict their enemies in terms that appeal to the prospective donor. Inviting Americans to join in nasty guerrilla fighting that has lasted for nearly forty years would get few takers, the Cold War having now been over for more than a decade. If going after drug traffickers is the way to win U.S. material support, then it is as an anti-drug campaign that Colombia's national plan will be pitched.

It is perhaps not surprising that President Pastrana has had trouble mobilizing Colombian support for a new plan couched in these terms, for Colombians tend to see their problems as a consequence of America's appetite for drugs. They worry little about cocaine refineries in some distant jungle of their own country, much less about crackheads in Los Angeles. To most Colombians, the drug war is America's war—Colombians are its victims. Further escalation, especially greater use of herbicides, wins Pastrana no applause.

Whatever the spin, U.S. assistance to Colombia is not solely about stopping drugs. It is intended also to help Colombia reverse an eroding security situation created by the growing challenge of Marxist guerrillas, whose recent military offensives have penetrated to the outskirts of Bogotá itself. Any division between the two issues is artificial: Colombia's insurgency and its role in the drug trade are inextricably intertwined. So long as U.S. demand for cocaine and heroin remains high, Colombia's guerrillas and gangsters will have ample funds to field their armies, and so long as they field armies, the drug trade will continue.

Questions arise when the assistance package, as currently envisaged, is assessed in terms of its contribution to combating the insurgency. Colombia's armed forces have made significant improvements lately, restructuring themselves to free more troops for combat and gain greater mobility, but they still suffer from a number of serious problems. With more than 140,000 soldiers, they outnumber the guerrillas by eight to one, but fewer than a quarter of them are deployable. The army is garrison-bound, scattered in small outposts; a significant portion of it is tied down guarding oil fields, pipelines, power stations and other infrastructure. It lacks equipment. Mostly poor conscripts, its soldiers lack motivation. They also lack the support of a nation that, despite its precarious situation, has failed to mobilize for war. Colombian officers also complain that the armed forces are hampered by outmoded U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine, unreasonable human rights constraints and weak-kneed politicians.

Unless we were to replace the country's nationalistic officers with English-speaking toadies, dependent on U.S. assistance and approval, the Colombian armed forces will continue to fight their own wars and resist U.S. military interference. This will be no Vietnam. Traditional counterinsurgency strategy would support improved tactical intelligence, the creation of crack fighting units, and increased air mobility, all of which comprise the bulk of the assistance package. However, experience suggests that effective military units take time to develop. High-tech helicopters are hard to maintain and today may be countered with low-cost air defense weapons. In any case, military superiority by itself does not guarantee success. While Black Hawk helicopters will enable Colombian forces to strike deep into now inaccessible areas, there are guerrilla fronts operating within sight of Bogotá's skyscrapers. One thus needs to be extremely cau-

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tious in applying traditional counterinsurgency doctrines to present-day Colombia.

The Down Side

AS WE HAVE seen in the Middle East and Northern Ireland, the endgame of any conflict is complicated and can be bloody. Colombia's guerrillas have not fought for forty years for the mere privilege of quitting. Recognizing that it cannot impose a military solution, the government sees negotiations as an alternate way to end the fighting. Peace is its goal.

Not so for men who have devoted their entire lives to fighting, who believe in the efficacy of violence, have built an alternate society and economy based upon continued struggle, and who know that the government—by virtue of its offers to negotiate—cannot hope to triumph militarily. Such men see negotiations as a continuation of their struggle by other means. Colombia's guerrillas would welcome political concessions that make them popular and increase their strength—concessions that President Pastrana, even if he wanted, probably could not deliver. They are willing, too, to field a political party. But their ultimate goal remains the seizure of power, not reconciliation. Demobilizing or disarming would deprive their leadership of authority and expose them to retaliation. They recall that many of those who accepted previous amnesties and entered the political process as candidates were gunned down. Demobilization would also expose peasant coca growers to government attacks and exploitation by the drug traffickers. And it would end what has become a profitable enterprise for the guerrillas.

On the other hand, negotiations provide the guerrillas with a temporary respite in the fighting, geographic sanctuary in the demilitarized territory granted to them by the government, a chance to recuperate, rearm and plan new offensives. The government, too, may welcome a respite in the fighting, which would allow it to address urgent economic issues. It might even content itself with a *de facto* partition and political accommodation that left the guerrillas armed but relatively inactive in the areas where they now encamp.

Colombian and U.S. officials hope that weakening the guerrillas' financial base by more effective attacks on the drug trade will force them to negotiate. The fundamental logic of this seems sound, but its application will take time. Colombia will not begin to receive the Black Hawk helicopters until 2002. In the meantime, we are uncertain as to the resources in the guerrillas' war chest—the figures vary wildly. To the extent that destruction of coca crops with herbicide and heliborne assaults on drug refineries succeed, peasants and workers will be unemployed and angry, expanding the pool of potential recruits for the guerrilla forces.

The hope is that the highly visible entry of the United States into the conflict—an American general is being sent to Colombia to command several hundred U.S. military instructors—might also impress the guerrillas with the message that the might of the United States is against them. This is doubtful, however, and could very well backfire.

In recent years, the guerrilla leadership has portrayed its campaign as a struggle against Yankee imperialism. This is standard Latin American Marxist propaganda, but it resonates with highly nationalistic Colombians. The Pastrana administration is politically vulnerable on this issue, especially in the Andes, where Presidents Fujimori of Peru and Chávez of Venezuela have made political capital by thumbing their noses at Washington. Utterly ignoring the realities of their own history and the currently dim prospects for peace, it will be easy for Colombians

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to blame the United States for undermining the negotiations and perpetuating the violence. The Colombian government will be seen to be fighting America's drug war even more than it is now.

Will U.S. assistance attract additional international support for Colombia? On the contrary, increasing U.S. military assistance to Colombia may discourage additional needed aid from other countries. Although Europe consumes a growing volume of cocaine from Colombia, European governments have already criticized what they regard as a U.S. military approach to the problem. They are especially critical of Colombia's poor human rights record. Despite the whiff of hypocrisy in these condemnations, the Colombian government has counted heavily on European contributions.

U.S. military assistance may also impede a regional approach. The countries that border Colombia have much to lose if its conflicts spill over into their territories. Conceivably, we might have hoped for a reprise of something like the Contadora Group, set up to help mediate an end to Central American conflicts, most notably El Salvador's civil war. Brazil has expressed ambitions to take the diplomatic lead in sorting out some of the continent's problems, although thus far it has done little to realize this, while Peru has been preoccupied with its own political problems. The role of the Venezuelan government is unclear. Colombia's guerrillas have crossed into Venezuelan territory to kidnap ranchers, but there are rumors that President Chávez, ideologically sympathetic to the guerrillas, is secretly providing them with support.

FURTHER U.S. military assistance to Colombia will increase the risk of terrorist attacks on American targets, such as U.S. corporations in Colombia. Colombia's guerrillas and drug traffickers have all effectively utilized terrorist tactics—assassinations, kidnappings, car bombs, hijackings and sabotage of aircraft—to eliminate their opponents, intimidate the government, and achieve various other political ends. We also could see attempts to capture or abduct U.S. military personnel or civilians providing technical support to the Colombian armed forces, thus creating hostage crises to which we as a nation are extremely sensitive. During the Cuban Revolution in the 1950s, abducted U.S. Marines were held hostage by Castro's guerrillas to discourage the bombing of guerrilla bases by the Cuban air force. One could envisage similar scenarios in Colombia. Similarly, it is not far-fetched to contemplate the hijacking or sabotage of a U.S. airliner.

Conceivably, the violence might even be carried to American soil. Fear of terrorism ought not to dictate U.S. foreign policy, but it must be counted as a risk. A spectacular terrorist attack could provoke escalation or a prompt departure of U.S. forces, as in Lebanon and Somalia. Human rights will also figure heavily in any national debate, more so than in Vietnam. We should identify human rights as an ongoing concern, set realistic goals, and monitor progress, but it will not be easy to tie military assistance directly to progress in human rights, as some have suggested.

Finally, increased U.S. involvement in Colombia's civil wars will provoke intense debate in the United States, especially if it leads to an escalation in the fighting, association with human rights violations, terrorist attacks, American casualties, and domestic division. The broader debate about America's role in the world—our ability to take on long-term tasks, our willingness to accept the consequent risks—has yet to be resolved.

It is a sobering picture. U.S. assistance to Colombia probably will not significantly diminish the flow of drugs and will not

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reduce the level of violence there. It will not enable Colombia's armed forces to defeat the guerrillas, while a negotiated end to the insurgency seems as unlikely today as in decades past. U.S. assistance may provide President Pastrana with a political victory, but it may also increase local resentment of his government and discourage other foreign support. It also involves risks to us.

These are not arguments against the principle of American assistance to Colombia. They are arguments for lowering our expectations and rethinking our approach, beginning with de-emphasizing the drug war as the pillar of U.S. involvement. Assisting the Colombian army by improving its mobility through training and tactical intelligence are sensible steps, although we may want to consider trading off the costly high-tech aircraft for more immediately deployable resources. Persuading the European nations and Japan to join in a major effort to improve Colombia's economy would also be a useful step. The United States itself can do more to facilitate trade and encourage development. Above all, we must be prepared for a long haul. Colombia's guerrillas think in decades. We should do the same. □

A Matter of Context

Moral principles have their place in the heart of the individual and in the shaping of his own conduct, whether as a citizen or as a government official. In this capacity they are essential to the successful functioning of any political society that rests on popular consent. There is no one who believes this more deeply than I do. But when the individual's behavior passes through the machinery of political organization and merges with that of millions of other individuals to find its expression in the actions of a government, then it undergoes a general transmutation, and the same moral concepts are no longer relevant to it. A government is an agent, not a principal; and no more than any other agent may it attempt to be the conscience of its principal. In particular, it may not subject itself to those supreme laws of renunciation and self-sacrifice that represent the culmination of individual moral growth.

Morality, then, as the channel to individual self-fulfillment—yes. Morality as the foundation of civic virtue, and accordingly as a condition precedent to successful democracy—yes. Morality in governmental method, as a matter of conscience and preference on the part of our people—yes. But morality as a general criterion for the determination of the behavior of states and above all as a criterion for measuring and comparing the behavior of different states—no. Here other criteria, sadder, more limited, more practical, must be allowed to prevail.

—George Kennan, *Realities of American Foreign Policy*

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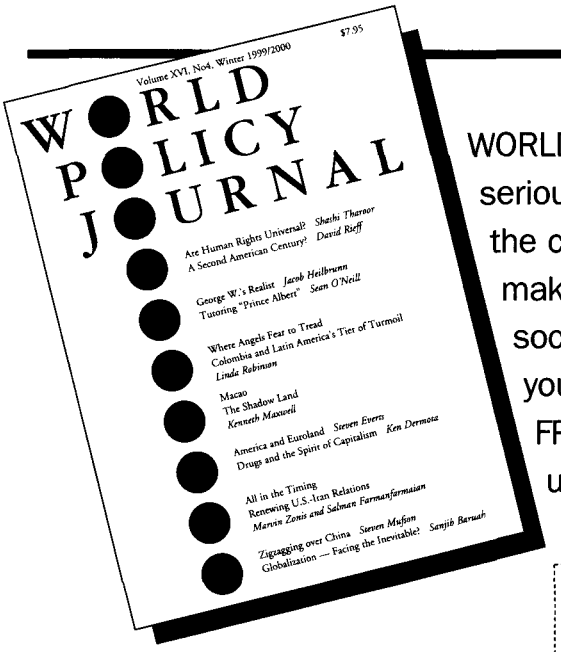
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The Praetorian Guard

William Pfaff

IN THEIR recent article in these pages on civil-military relations in the United States, Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn observed that "the lack of an urgent and immediate threat to the nation's existence, of the kind that during the Cold War forced military and civilian elites to reconcile their differences, may now foster a much higher level of civil-military conflict" than in the past, given that ours "is the first period in American history in which a large professional military has been maintained in peacetime."[1] They do not, however, question the wisdom of maintaining a huge military establishment in a period when there is no threat to the United States that can be compared with the one that existed, or was not unreasonably assumed to exist, during the Cold War—indeed, that is maintained when there is virtually no threat at all to the nation of the kind for which military force provides a solution.

In his article in the same issue, "Why the Gap Matters", Eliot A. Cohen describes the deep differences between the nature of the "imperial" U.S. Army of today—the demands placed upon it by "ambiguous objectives, interminable commitments and chronic skirmishes"—and the mass democratic armies of the past, raised to win wars. He too does not address the fundamental question as to whether this imperial role that the United States has assumed is justified in the international political circumstances of the present day or of the reasonably foreseeable future, and thus whether the post-Cold War military instrument the country possesses remains the appropriate one.

The imperial role is self-assigned. Its historical rationale lapsed with the end of the Cold War. No doubt Russia and China could eventually (re)establish the weaponry of global power, but this is a distant prospect, and the prospect that either would want global confrontation is yet more remote. That China should want regional influence is predictable and reasonable, and in itself constitutes no threat to the United States (other than to a United States set on controlling China).

Civilian issues overwhelmingly dominate America's relations with the world today: matters of trade, finance and investment, information exchange and intellectual property concerns, myriad other commercial issues, and human rights concerns. Relevant power is civilian power: economic, financial, technological, industrial, intellectual. This is why "Europe" is a serious international rival to

William Pfaff is a syndicated columnist for the *International Herald Tribune*.

[1] Feaver and Kohn, "The Gap: Soldiers, Civilians and their Mutual Misunderstanding", *The National Interest* (Fall 2000).

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the United States today, even though its conventional military power is slight in comparison. Nonetheless, the prominence of military institutions in the United States and the availability of overwhelming force tend to influence the formulation of policy in ways that invite military remedies, even when these may be irrelevant, leading to the misuse of the military instrument by civilian authorities.

Many, if not most, policy professionals would agree that the threats currently enumerated to justify the existence of this imperial army are often exaggerated for partisan political reasons or to serve established institutional or industrial interests. A certain paranoia marks much discussion of "rogue nations", mass destruction terrorism and the threat posed by China (as it did the feared Y2K fiasco). There is a record of serious American overestimation of threats, as with the grossly exaggerated global significance of the communist uprising in Vietnam in the 1950s and 1960s (and of the prospective consequences of American defeat there), and with communism in Central and Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s.

In 1989–90, even as the Soviet system was disintegrating, U.S. policymakers remained convinced that the Soviet state still constituted an international power in some sense equivalent to the United States itself—a global political, ideological and military threat to liberal democracy—when it was actually an ideologically exhausted, economically collapsing system undergoing a deep, internal moral and political crisis.

That error might have prompted subsequent reflection on how realistic the country's conception was of the international scene beyond the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, but it did not. There was, instead, self-congratulation. The Soviet Union's collapse (from its internal contradictions, as Marx might have understood) was audaciously appropriated as America's victory (Star Wars did it). There was no reappraisal of the degree to which we had collaborated for a half century in a Russian millenarian fantasy, validating it by the scale and intensity of our response, turning Russia's fantasy to the support of a certain millenarianism of our own, which still survives.

Since then, the Pentagon has promoted a strategy of "preponderance" over any possible military rival or combination of rivals. Congress has voted to continue the pursuit of defensive missile systems and prepare for what presidents, their advisers and various official commissions have announced as dramatic new threats to the nation. These allegedly stem from electronic, bacteriological, chemical and nuclear terrorism, wielded by rogue states and rich Saudi Arabian merchants. The United States began the new millennium as the most heavily militarized nation on earth, and possibly the most frightened.

The policy community debates the merits of "traditional leadership", or "multilateralism", against those of global primacy (hegemony being excluded from a politically correct vocabulary)—to the advantage, during the second Clinton administration, of the last-named, a global program of U.S. power assertion. Confirmed in its self-esteem, proud of victory in the Cold War and the singularity of its power, Washington proclaimed the United States the "indispensable nation." One says "Washington" advisedly, since all this is primarily an affair of the governing and policy classes, rather than of the public, relieved to be rid of the Cold War.

IN SEPTEMBER 1939, when Europe went to war, the U.S. Army (including the Army Air Corps, which did not become a separate service until 1947) numbered 174,000 men. The nation had an old and principled hostility to "standing armies", believed to be a threat to democracy. That

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sentiment was explicit in the Constitution, whose drafters delegated to Congress the authority "to raise and support armies", but made that power subject to the condition that "no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years." The standing military force was constitutionally confined to a "well-regulated militia" in the individual states. A militia is a body of civilians who have received military instruction and can be called up for service in a national emergency. Today that militia is the National Guard, normally under the authority of state governors. John Hancock said in 1774 that from a militia "we have nothing to fear; their interest is the same as that of the state."

Currently, the United States has 1.4 million persons in its "standing army", members of its regular navy and air force included (but excluding the Coast Guard), and a ready reserve and National Guard force of nearly 2.5 million. The population has roughly doubled since 1939. The standing army has increased by a power of eight. If reserves are counted, it is 22 times the size of the 1939 force. Today's force holds itself prepared to wage two simultaneous major wars in different parts of the world, even though the United States faces no serious military challenge. It is the United States, rather, that poses the military threat to others.

As of 1999, according to the *New York Times*, the United States still maintained some 2,300 nuclear warheads on alert, with an explosive power equivalent to 44,000 Hiroshimas. In 1998 the Clinton administration programmed more money for modernization and simulated testing of the nuclear force than, on annual average, was spent during the Cold War to build the force. The rationale for this is difficult to discern.

In his authoritative book, *A History of Militarism*, Alfred Vagts wrote that militarism is the

> domination of the military man over the civilian, an undue preponderance of military demands, an emphasis on military considerations, spirit, ideals, and scales of value, in the life of states. It has meant also the imposition of heavy burdens on a people for military purposes, to the neglect of welfare and culture.[2]

This inadequately describes America's situation today. The matter is more complicated, as Feaver and Kohn (and Cohen) suggest. The military man does not dominate civilian authority in a direct way and has no ambition to do so, even though the Joint Chiefs of Staff has successfully imposed unprecedented limits on civilian authority.

When General Colin Powell was chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he gave an interview to the *New York Times*, in which he courteously but firmly set forth the conditions (in terms of casualty risk and the political definition of the military objective) under which he and his colleagues were prepared to carry out presidential orders (the "Powell Doctrine"). This action would in an earlier time have been regarded as gross insubordination, and General Powell would have been reprimanded or dismissed.

Civilian government's loss of influence is undoubtedly due in part to the particular circumstances of the Clinton administration, in which the President has felt compelled to defer to military authority because of his own evasion of military service in the Vietnam War. However, the next president—and at the time of writing it is not known who it will be, Al Gore or George W. Bush—will not be in a strong position to re-establish civilian authority.

The argument for maintaining U.S. military forces on their existing scale holds that this is essential in order to deal

[2]Vagts, *A History of Militarism* (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), p. 14. The revised edition of a book first published in 1937.

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with a resurgent Russia or with China, which many in Washington perceive as a potentially hostile state. The first is not only a remote prospect, but the view that a successfully restored Russia must be an enemy is speculation, and rather dangerous speculation. The United States has no conflict of essential interests with China, only a rivalry for influence, although Washington has an obligation to see to Taiwan's security and other alliance matters in East Asia.

The Taiwan issue is essentially political and will be resolved, one way or another, when China experiences its long overdue crisis of regime, which will weaken China for the foreseeable future. Even a rash attempt by Beijing to impose a military solution would hardly constitute a threat to the United States. China has no way to attack the United States, other than with strategic nuclear weapons that it does not yet possess, may or may not possess in the future, and against which the United States already deploys a massive deterrent force.

Russia poses no conventional threat either to the United States or to its allies. A conceivable Russian nuclear threat (successfully deterred for the past half century) would actually be increased by ending certain existing arms limitation agreements. This has been contemplated by the Clinton administration and advocated in the Republican campaign platform for the 2000 election, in order to build a technologically implausible but (probably) psychologically and politically irresistible national missile defense, a seeming promise of invulnerability that responds to the nation's essential isolationism.[3]

Civilian militarism in the United States consists chiefly in the uncritical recourse to military measures to deal not only with foreign policy crises but with such civil society issues as terrorism and the drug trade. As nearly everyone would concede, the latter amounts to a politically motivated, external projection of what is fundamentally a domestic social problem. Military intervention in Colombia, for instance, is feasible, while the domestic drug problem seems insoluble. That the Colombian intervention will have virtually no effect on the real problem (and have negative effects of its own) is disregarded because of the imperative to do something.

Much is made of the threat from weapons of mass destruction wielded by "rogue nations" ("states of concern", as we are now enjoined to call them) or civilian terrorist groups. A federal advisory commission report in September 1999 asserted that the terrorist threat will increase over the next twenty-five years, although it cites little to demonstrate that this is so. It said that, as the United States is unprepared for terrorism, there would be "more pressure on the military to expand its scope into domestic law enforcement, as the line between foreign and domestic threats is blurred."[4]

William Cohen, President Clinton's secretary of defense, made the astounding forecast that a terrorist nuclear, chemical or biological attack upon the United States is "not only possible, but probable" before 2010. Yet the actual evidence that a major foreign terrorist threat exists tends to be anecdotal and highly, if not irresponsibly, speculative—"scenario-dependent", as the planners say.

The domestic terrorist threat in any case is fundamentally a police problem, whatever its sources in foreign relations.

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[3]As Robert A. Levine of the RAND Corporation has written, a "system that doesn't work, may never work, and would serve no useful purpose if it did work." *International Herald Tribune*, August 9, 2000.

[4]Creation of a new army Continental Command, responsible for dealing with terrorism within the United States, has already given the military constitutionally unprecedented emergency authority in civil matters.

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The rogue nation threat is that of an "irrational" one-off attack. If it cannot be deterred by the same measures that prevented Cold War nuclear disasters, it is unlikely to be deterred at all. America's bombing of Colonel Muammar Qaddafi's Libya in 1986 did not, as is usually claimed, deter terrorism, but, according to the assertions of the U.S. government itself, provoked the Libyan government to have a bomb placed aboard Pan American flight 103 two years later, whose explosion over Lockerbie, Scotland, killed 270 persons, most of them Americans.

Also neglected in most discussions of terrorism is the fact that the greater part of the international terrorism of the postwar period has had its source in five decades of Middle Eastern war or tension. If there were to be a final and fair settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Syrian conflicts, followed by a withdrawal from U.S. bases in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf (predicated on the canonical American belief in market solutions, which logically argues that Middle Eastern oil, being indigestible in itself, would under virtually any conditions find its way to the only people who need to buy it, the industrial West), normalization of U.S. relations with the Islamic world would follow and the principal terrorist threats could be expected to disappear. Needless to say, neither hypothesis seems likely today.

THE RESEARCH published by the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS), which Feaver and Kohn cite, notes that, "[a]t least since 1816, there has been a very durable pattern in U.S. behavior: the more veterans in the national political elite, the less likely the United States is to initiate the use of force in the international arena."[5] The twenty-first century finds World War II and Korean War veterans nearly all gone from U.S. political life and the number of Vietnam veterans in decline. This implies that in the future America's political class will possess even fewer internalized inhibitions about the use of force than is now the case.

The TISS studies also found that the absence of civilian leaders with military experience has tended to draw military leaders out of their traditional constitutional role as disinterested professional advisers to civilian authority, and has contributed to turning them into "policy advocates and decisionmakers." Military officers now are routinely given assignments in the civilian chain of command, or when retired move to civilian government. It is widely thought that George W. Bush would make General Colin Powell his secretary of state.

It has been demonstrated that civilian leaders without military experience tend to have a more aggressive view of the utility of military force than do military leaders themselves, which is why, as Feaver and Kohn write, "a majority of elite military officers today believes that it is proper for the military to *insist* rather than merely to *advise* (or even advocate in private) on key matters, particularly those involving the use of force."

Another aspect of this is that the Pentagon has in recent years established an apparatus of relationships with foreign armies and navies, which allows it to conduct what amounts to a foreign policy parallel to that of the State Department or Congress. The Pentagon's system of military commands (or CINCs, referring to the commanders-in-chief who head them), covering the major regions of the world, has been greatly strengthened since the end of the Cold War, in part because the Clinton administration found the CINCs to be more flexible instruments of foreign policy than the civilian agen-

[5]For details on the project, see its web site, www.poli.duke.edu/civmil.

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cies. Dana Priest recently described them in the *Washington Post* as "the modern-day equivalent of the Roman Empire's proconsuls: well-funded, semi-autonomous, unconventional centers of U.S. foreign policy", which in the past decade have

> enjoyed a budgetary boom unscrutinized by Congress. There is no reliable accounting of the hundreds of millions of dollars the CINCs spend each year, and congressional oversight committees have not asked for one. The Pentagon intentionally keeps its classified, piecemeal version of their budgets out of Congress's hands,

even though their headquarters budgets outside Washington are today twice what they were when the Cold War ended. According to Priest, "they travel nonstop, oversee multimillion-dollar foreign study institutes and round-the-clock intelligence centers, host international conferences and direct disaster relief."[6]

The CINCs have become more important agents of U.S. foreign policy than the embassies in their regions because of their wealth and their lack of congressional and press scrutiny. They have also become generators of policy, as they hold regional responsibilities and are the primary U.S. contact for foreign military establishments, which in many non-Western countries are the principal centers of power. At a recent Bahrain conference where 70 U.S. civilian and military officials met several hundred regional officials, the U.S. Central Command CINC, General Anthony Zinni, was placed in the lead car in the official reception, even though six U.S. ambassadors present officially outranked him.

The CINCs are accused of having maintained, through subterfuge, programs with Indonesian and Central American armies that Congress had voted to suspend because of human rights violations (the CINCs renamed the programs). Their rationale for such initiatives is that they see problems in a way that Washington cannot see them. In an interview with the *Washington Post*, General Zinni, whose theater prior to his retirement included twenty-five countries, expressed concern that the foreign policy system

> is badly broken. . . . If I go over to the State Department, I have four bureaus to visit. We need to revamp the entire engagement program. . . . Everybody thinks we're going to help in reordering the world. . . . Washington reacts to Beltway issues [that] don't mean anything out here.

The concerns of the CINCs are often justified, but the role they have assumed in the making as well as execution of policy represents an immense shift of influence in Washington to the military from the civilian agencies mandated to conceive and conduct foreign policy.

The military effectively dominates Congress so far as military budgets are concerned, which is not unwelcome to legislators, since the Pentagon has by now so widely distributed expenditures that there is hardly a congressional district in which there is not a military manufacturer to contribute campaign funds or a job-creating military installation. Congress thus supports weapons programs and military installations that the Pentagon does not necessarily want.

Thus, there are current proposals in Washington to set the Pentagon budget permanently at a fixed percentage of GNP. The Marine Corps commandant, General James Jones, and the departing naval chief of staff, Jay Johnson, proposed last June that the military budget be fixed permanently at 4 percent of GNP. Former defense secretaries Harold Brown and James Schlesinger have supported the

[6]Priest, *Washington Post*, September 28, 2000.

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idea of a permanent budget fixed that high or higher.

This proposal, if adopted, would remove from Congress a part of its constitutional power over spending (and, implicitly, taxation), while permanently exempting the Pentagon from the necessity to justify its expenditures. It would give the military a unique status as part of the permanent structure of government itself, rather than as servants of policy to be re-inforced, reduced or redirected according to circumstance, the needs of the nation, and the state of the world. It would perpetuate a size and deployment of the military that was established in circumstances of world war and world crisis, and make this the peacetime norm. If adopted in this decade, it would also, as one Pentagon critic of the idea, Frank Spinney, has observed, "amount to a declaration of war on the following decade's Social Security and Medicare." It is an absolutely terrible idea, but it has been advanced by serious people, and stands a chance of being adopted.

Military expenditure since the 1940s has also been the principal support of scientific and industrial research and advanced technological development, providing wide non-military applications. The Pentagon has subsidized high-technology arms exports and furnishes the United States with an American version of a national industrial policy. None of this could be ended or even sharply reduced without serious domestic economic consequences, automatically generating enormous political opposition.

The authors of the Triangle Institute report conclude that the principle of civilian control of the armed forces has since the 1960s been subjected "to more ongoing strain than at any time in American history." For the first time, the United States has been "obligated to manage the cultural gap [between civilians and the military] whilst the military is large and powerful, yet without an external threat to focus civil-military cooperation." They go on:

> Many of the problems and failures of recent American military interventions originated not in excessive or incompetent civilian meddling but in poor civilian oversight, particularly in failures to insist upon open and candid dialogue with the military, to plan, to ask difficult or unpleasant questions, and to scrutinize military activities so as to connect means with ends.

Another qualified critic, a professor of political science at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Don M. Snider, recently wrote that "the professionalism of the military has declined since the end of the Gulf War, and markedly so. Whether measured by military-technical (warfighting), ethical or socio-political standards of professionalism, this decline can be readily seen."[7]

The military forces today play a larger role in national life than their counterparts in any state outside the Third World. The country has fallen into a condition where the military increasingly intrudes into a political realm from which in the past it considered itself banned by constitutional interpretation and convention, and by the officer's own conception of his duty and role.

Military considerations and modes of thought have acquired an importance in the country's foreign relations that has no constitutional warrant, and which encourages the civilian makers of policy to turn to the military for remedies to international problems for which the only real solutions (where they exist) are political. This is a matter of importance for the future of the American political system, but is also an important practical problem, in that this

[7]Snider, "America's Postmodern Military", *World Policy Journal* (Spring 2000), pp. 52-3.

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American militarism is a disutility in the world today.

The end of the Cold War has left the United States with a huge military establishment of unprecedented policy influence. This establishment is unleavened by an enlisted corps of civilian national servicemen or a cadre of temporarily serving reserve officers, as in the past, before the army's post-Vietnam professionalization. One can no longer say what the army's chief of staff, General Fred Weyand, said in 1976:

> The American army really is a people's army in the sense that it belongs to the American people who take a jealous and proprietary interest in [it]. . . . In the final analysis the American army is not so much an arm of the Executive Branch as it is an arm of the American people.

It has, instead, become an estranged element in our national society, exercising a distorting influence upon the nation's policies. □

A Shortage of Targets

In retrospect, it can now be recognized that the Cold War, with its ritualized nuclear threats and mostly symbolic military manoeuvres, concealed the debellicization of the Europeans—the result of a moral change that would be consolidated by demographic change—an altogether firmer barrier against bellicosity than democratic change. In the absence of expendable children, 'post-heroic' wars may only be fought against enemies that offer stable and high-value targets for remote air attack—which implies a high degree of economic development that in turn rarely coexists with conduct that leads to war. Serbia may have been the only candidate in Europe, while outside it there are not many countries sufficiently developed to be worth bombing, yet sufficiently backward politically to provoke bombardment.

—Edward N. Luttwak, *Times Literary Supplement*, October 6, 2000

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Nasty Little Wars

Anatol Lieven

A scrimmage in a border station—
A canter down some dark defile—
Two thousand pounds of education
Drops to a ten-rupee *jezail* . . .

—Rudyard Kipling, *Arithmetic on the Frontier*

NATO's victory in Kosovo represents not a new paradigm but simply a new turn in an old historical pattern that we would do well to study. On the one hand, over the past five centuries Western technological superiority has repeatedly brought military victories and ensured Western domination of the globe. On the other, in every age there have been numerous occasions when Western powers suffered local defeats, sometimes so severe as to drive them from a region altogether or bring down regimes in Europe. The reasons for these defeats were generally to be found in a combination of local culture, geography, and Western arrogance and ignorance.

The difference today is that Western tolerance of casualties is lower, and the stakes—at least when it comes to the potential use of weapons of mass destruction by non-state actors—are a great deal higher. In 1879 the British could lose more than 1,500 men in an hour at Isandlwana, shrug it off, and go on to conquer Zululand. In 1993–94 the United States was forced out of Somalia after 18 men were killed.

What the examples of Mogadishu, Beirut and Grozny demonstrate is that today the most dangerous terrain for the West is not the mountains or jungles of the past, but the city. There, the automatic rifle and the rocket-propelled grenade still give local irregulars technological advantages of which their nineteenth-century equivalents could only dream, and which Western forces still cannot neutralize. The most dangerous enemy, meanwhile, is not the regular general, but some combination of terrorist commander, ward politician, traditional clan leader transposed to an urban setting, and criminal warlord or gang boss.

Most Western military hierarchies desperately want to believe that future wars involving their countries will be regular affairs against regular enemy forces, preferably fighting at sea or in the middle of an open desert. But to fight the United States on such terms would indeed be suicidal—which is why our enemies are unlikely to attempt it. Western technological superiority is only one reason why this is not the kind of war we have to fear. Equally important is that the ruling elites of most of the important states around the world—Russians, Chinese and Indians included—

Anatol Lieven is a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. His book, *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power*, was published in paperback by Yale University Press in 1999.

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are already to a considerable extent included in the international economic order, and as such have much more to lose than to gain from war with the United States.

The real danger comes not from them, but from the *excluded*: all those numerous social and ethnic groups who, for reasons of culture, history or geography, are unable to partake of the world banquet. Many of these groups and individuals are far too weak and miserable to threaten any major power. But some have proud cultural traditions that make it very difficult to accept peripheral, second-class status; others have strong fighting traditions that give them a distinct edge in certain kinds of warfare, organized crime, and the areas where the two intersect. To fight successfully against such people on their own ground requires a level of local knowledge that is exceptionally difficult for outsiders to acquire. It may also require an urban gang leader's mixture of flexibility and utter ruthlessness—neither of which is encouraged by the militaries of Western democracies. As Rick said to the German officer in *Casablanca*, "Well, Major, there are parts of New York I wouldn't advise you to try and invade."

Imperial Precedents

DURING THE 1999 Kosovo war, the amount of damage inflicted by NATO planes and missiles, compared to the complete inability of the Yugoslav air defenses to inflict damage in return, was indeed highly reminiscent of certain nineteenth-century campaigns. On November 3, 1839, two small, elderly British frigates shattered the Chinese southern fleet off Chuenpi, in the first major engagement of the First Opium War. Hundreds of Chinese were killed; one British seaman was wounded. This set the scene for other such nineteenth-century battles, like Ulundi in 1879, when the British killed thousands of Zulus for the loss of ten men of their own, and Omdurman in 1896. The First Opium War also echoed even more comprehensive victories three centuries earlier, when, thanks to superior technology (and infectious disease), a handful of Spanish adventurers destroyed the great empires of the Aztecs and the Incas.

Unlike nineteenth-century Western victories, the most important aspect of the NATO air campaign was not its effect on the enemy's armed forces. Yugoslav forces on the ground in Kosovo suffered only around five hundred dead. (Moreover, there is strong evidence to suggest that most of those deaths took place when the Kosovo Liberation Army, or KLA, launched an offensive over the mountains from Albania. This forced the Yugoslavs to come out of concealment and concentrate against the KLA, and thereby exposed them to NATO fire.) What was indubitable, and much more important, was the effect of NATO's bombardment on Yugoslav infrastructure. NATO air forces (or, rather, those of the United States, with limited European assistance) demonstrated with complete conviction that any large, fixed target such as a bridge, power station, oil refinery or factory could be destroyed from a safe distance. As long as U.S. cruise missiles and "smart bombs" are around, the United States will be able to inflict severe damage on the economies of much more powerful states than Yugoslavia at a very small cost in U.S. lives.

But to defeat or deter a state, as the British did in the case of the Manchus or NATO did in the case of Yugoslavia, you have to be fighting against a state. Yugoslavia surrendered as it did because the Yugoslav Army and police are the disciplined forces of a modern state, and were under the effective control of a semi-autocratic president, Slobodan Milosevic. When Milosevic decided to give in—not because Yugoslavia could not have gone on resisting for a considerable time, but for

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English and Zulu forces at the battle of Isandlwana.

his own political reasons—the Yugoslav forces obeyed and withdrew from Kosovo.

If the Serbian population in Kosovo had been much larger, and had supported its own autonomous militia under local warlords, would such forces have surrendered? If not, how would NATO have coerced them? If the new regime in Serbia or a future one should support indirect attacks on NATO forces, how will NATO respond if economic and diplomatic pressure should fail to work? Will it be by defeating and occupying the whole of Serbia and suppressing any armed revolt from among the population? If not, how?

The trouble is that bombing bridges and factories has no effect on irregular forces, and bombing villages and concentrations of people is supposedly outlawed today by the rules of humanitarian warfare—though this prohibition is likely to prove a brief one when we next get involved in a really important war. The only recourses for NATO in Kosovo against an autonomous Serbian militia would have been either a compromise involving the partition of the province between Serbs and Albanians, or giving massive help to the KLA to crush the Serbian militias on the ground. In the latter case—as with U.S. help to the Croatian army in 1995, or the Israeli alliance with the Christian militias in Lebanon in 1982—NATO would have borne moral responsibility for the massacres of Serbian civilians that undoubtedly would have followed.

While NATO's victory over Kosovo may therefore be considered a more or less impressive event in the history of warfare between states, it provides no instruction whatsoever for other kinds of war to which it has been linked: wars against peoples in arms; and wars against decentralized, anarchical or "tribal" societies. It also provides no answers for the dilemmas involved in urban warfare and in occupying, administering and policing recalcitrant areas.

To make the point, between the two Western victories against Iraq and

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Yugoslavia came the debacle of U.S. involvement in Somalia. During the urban fighting in Mogadishu, many aspects of U.S. tactics—weaponry, intelligence and, above all, political analysis—proved wanting to some degree. Somalia also proved the limitations of Western humanitarian concern in real battles on the ground. According to Captain Kevin W. Brown of the U.S. Marine Corps, during the October 3, 1993 attempt to capture General Mohammed Farrah Aideed,

> U.S. restraints [on the use of force] unraveled once Aideed's rebels began to exact a toll in American lives. In the ensuing desperate rescue attempt, our forces fired at rebel gunmen who were interspersed among crowds of Somali civilians. . . . When facing fierce opposition, both Russian and U.S. rules of engagement have either been disregarded or relaxed once infantry forces began taking heavy casualties. This pattern has held true over the past 50 years of urban conflict. . . . What is the proper balance between avoiding collateral destruction and properly protecting our infantry forces? Unfortunately, history reveals that neither the U.S. nor Russian militaries have found a way to simultaneously accomplish both objectives in the face of a determined and capable urban foe.[1]

This is not intended as a criticism of the way in which firepower was used or threatened in Somalia, for in the last resort and when faced with death, soldiers like most other human beings will fight with all the means available; and the second duty of every commander—after the achievement of victory—is to his own men. The Rangers' fight in Mogadishu should, however, be a most searing reminder that the sort of orderly, "sanitized", limited war fought by NATO over Kosovo remains very much the exception, both historically and in today's world.

The Gulf War and Kosovo were both preceded and followed by other instructive defeats. The stationing of U.S. troops in Lebanon in 1982, as in Somalia, led to dangerous mission creep. This, in turn, alienated much of the local population, drew U.S. troops into ethnic conflict, and, finally, exposed them to devastating terrorist attacks from elements of the local population. In Kosovo, the NATO occupation since the end of the war there has failed to protect the local Serbian minority, and has also failed to create a democratic, let alone multi-ethnic, Kosovo. As a result, NATO will sooner or later be faced with a set of choices, every one of which may involve a measure of moral disgrace and political humiliation.

By not invading and occupying Iraq in 1991, the United States avoided terrorist and guerrilla attacks by local militias. This decision, however, also meant that Saddam Hussein would stay in power and remain a threat and an irritant to the United States (as well as to his own people) ever since. In other words, Western victory in the Gulf left George Bush with a dilemma for which military superiority gave no solution. For as Major General Robert Scales has observed, "without physical occupation warfare is nothing more than punishment from a distance, something that any nation with a will to resist can endure indefinitely." And even if the enemy government does give in, the effect may prove short-lived.[2]

Fighting Tribes

GIVEN sufficient technological superiority, organized states under "rational" leaderships can be defeated with relative ease. Once their leaders accept defeat, the war is over. Perhaps even more important, once conquered they can be administered using the bureaucratic institutions and

[1]Brown, "The Urban Warfare Dilemma", *Marine Corps Gazette* (January 1997), p. 27.

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habits of mass obedience inculcated under the former order.

It is vastly otherwise with tribal and semi-tribal societies, whose social disciplines are based not on submission to state authority or laws given from above, but on forms of "ordered anarchy": where no permanent, centralized authority exists, and where there is no "army" that can surrender—only local volunteers without uniforms or regular units, fighting on the basis of blood, personal ties or religious allegiance. Too many Western observers and staff officers in every age have dismissed such adversaries as "savages", their sacrificial courage as mere "fanaticism"—and have subsequently paid the price. As Kipling put it concerning the Sudanese followers of the Mahdi, "You're a poor benighted heathen but a first class fighting man." In covering wars in Chechnya, Afghanistan and elsewhere, I formed a deep respect for such locals as warriors—the same people seen as alien and often contemptible from a Western cultural perspective.

Not merely is it far more difficult to defeat such societies (at least without murdering much of the civilian population in the process), but officers and officials of modern states often have the greatest difficulty understanding how such societies work and devising even theoretical means of dealing with them. Russian officials who planned the intervention in Chechnya in December 1994 have good cause to remember this, as do U.S. officials who served in Somalia. A key aspect of these societies is summed up by the anthropologist I.M. Lewis in a passage about the Somali tradition, aspects of which have carried over into the urban clan and gang warfare of today:

> The Somali have no indigenous centralized government. And this lack of formal government and of instituted authority is strongly reflected in their extreme independence and individualism. Few writers have failed to notice the formidable pride of the Somali nomad, his extraordinary sense of superiority as an individual, and his firm conviction that he is sole master of his actions and subject to no authority save that of God. If they have noticed it, however, they have for the most part been baffled by the shifting character of the nomad's political allegiance and puzzled by the fact that the political and jural unit with which he acts on one occasion, he opposes on another.[3]

The complex clan, family, religious, personal and opportunistic allegiances of ordinary Somali fighters are not amenable to examination and analysis by U.S. satellites or unmanned spy planes. The same goes for the Chechens, who, though not nomadic, are a tribal people, with no tradition either of generating their own state or of accepting one from outside—except, to a limited extent, when this comes in the name of Islam. "In peacetime, they recognize no sovereign authority and may be fragmented into a hundred rival clans. However, in time of danger, when faced with aggression, the rival clans unite and elect a military leader."[4]

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Russian imperial army won a whole string of victories over

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[2]Scales, "A Sword with Two Edges: Maneuver in 21st Century Warfare", *Strategic Review* (Spring 1999), p. 53.

[3]Lewis, *Understanding Somalia: Guide to Culture, History, and Social Institutions* (London: HAAN Associates, 1993). Quoted in John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1995), p. 4.

[4]Sergei Arutiunov, "Ethnicity and Conflict in the Caucasus", in *Ethnic Conflict and Russian Intervention in the Caucasus*, ed. Fred Wehling (San Diego, CA: Institute for the Study of Global Conflict and Cooperation, 1996), p. 17.

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the Turks and various European rivals. It even fought Napoleon to a standstill. But it took decades to subdue comparatively tiny numbers of Chechens and other tribesmen in the mountains of the Caucasus. Nor was this a new pattern: the Spanish *conquistadores* subjugated the great Aztec and Inca empires in a few years—and then spent several centuries attempting to subdue much smaller numbers of primitive Yaquis, Apaches and Araucanians in the deserts of northern Mexico and the freezing wastes of southern Chile.

Such successful opposition could exist even in close proximity to the most developed states of the day: the British state did not succeed in "pacifying" the Gaelic clans of Scotland until after the Jacobite revolt of 1745, and then only by repressive measures, the savagery of which prefigured that of the anti-partisan wars of the twentieth century. This long British failure was due not only to the rugged terrain of the Highlands, but to the clans' mixture of highly decentralized authority with fanatical loyalty to the clan chiefs. As a result, the British authorities could rarely be entirely sure that an apparent ally would not change sides at a crucial moment. Nor without massive repression could the British force the highlanders, or the Gaelic Irish clans before them, to accept the authority of the new British state. In all these cases, the other side was strengthened not just by ethnic and cultural loyalties but also by a profound attachment to an ancient way of life menaced by modernizing forces.[5]

Afghanistan and Chechnya

THROUGHOUT its modern history, Afghanistan has displayed similar features. As bewildered and infuriated Western journalists and officials used to say of the Afghan *mujaheddin*: "You cannot buy an Afghan—you can only rent him." The British-Afghan War of 1839–42 provides a perfect counterpoint to the contemporaneous First Opium War. Whereas in China the defeat of the imperial army and navy led to a settlement with the imperial government and an end to the war, in Afghanistan in the 1840s, as in the 1980s, the multi-headed tribal and religious resistance could not be defeated in this way because there was no unified enemy authority with whom it was possible to make a settlement; and because, unlike the unarmed and generally passive Chinese peasantry, the Afghan tribesmen—like the Chechens and Native Americans—were fierce fighters, honoring warfare, trained to fight without mercy from an early age, and equipped with firearms that (like the Kalashnikovs and rocket-propelled grenades of partisan forces today) were extremely effective in certain circumstances.

In China, British officers at the time recognized the complete impossibility of invading and occupying the inland provinces, given the huge size of their territories and populations and the very small size of the British Army and its Indian auxiliary troops. Fortunately, there was no need to do so. When the British had demonstrated their ability to move at will down China's rivers, and had menaced Beijing, the resistance of the Chinese government collapsed.

In Afghanistan, the British defeated the Afghan forces with relative ease when the latter tried to defend the supposedly impregnable fortress of Ghazni in a straight fight. But there, too, the British did not have remotely enough troops to garrison the whole country. By late 1841, the force based in Kabul consisted of only

[5]For a recent survey of European wars with "primitive" peoples, portrayed as much as possible from the side of the resistance, see Mark Cocker, *Rivers of Blood, Rivers of Gold: Europe's Conquest of Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Grove Press, 2000).

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Photofest

one British and three British Indian infantry battalions and one cavalry regiment, with other "armies" in Kandahar and Jalalabad. The British thus relied on local Afghan allies, motivated by a mixture of political allegiance to the British puppet ruler, Shah Sujah, and British financial subsidies. Neither proved sufficient. The presence of "infidel" troops in Muslim Afghanistan whipped the anger of religious leaders and their followers into a frenzy. As so often occurs in such situations (for example, as with U.S. support for the Shah of Iran), infidel British support for Shah Sujah, far from strengthening him, actually undermined his authority over his own people. For one thing, the British could not check atrocities by Shah Sujah's followers against their personal and political enemies. As well, the British government of India—under pressure from the government and Parliament in London to economize—finally refused the funds necessary to strengthen the British camp at Kabul and cut the subsidy to the tribes who controlled the British lines of communication.

The result of all this was the defection of the British allies, a general rising, an appallingly bungled attempt to retreat from Kabul across the mountains in midwinter, and the destruction of the entire British force. In addition to all their other failings, the British force had been encumbered by an immense train of camp followers, servants and officers' luxuries—a syndrome not without its parallels in the comforts the U.S. Army now expects when deployed in the field.

In 1842 a much stronger British Army returned to recapture Kabul and wreak vengeance on its inhabitants: but the lesson had been learned. Never again did the British attempt permanently to station troops in Afghanistan, or reduce its rulers to the completely subservient condition of the British Indian princes. Instead, the British relied on a variety of "indirect" means to exert influence over Afghanistan. This approach saved them from renewed disasters and the draining financial and human costs of an endless war of occupation.

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But it also meant that throughout the entire period of the British Empire in India, Afghanistan was the source of a whole variety of security threats: notably, the preaching of anti-British *jihad* by local Muslim religious leaders (like the "Fakir of Ipi"), and the continual raiding of British territory by tribal "bandits." During the period of their presence on the Afghan frontier, the British tried various responses to these dangers, from the use of locally recruited elite troops (the famous Scouts and Guides) to seize individual troublemakers, to aerial bombardment of villages and flocks, to full-scale military expeditions.

By the 1920s, civilian casualties resulting from these tactics were drawing strong criticism from the Labour Party in Britain, and from socialist and pacifist groups abroad. More important, the effect of all these responses tended to be both limited and temporary, because it was largely pointless to try to improve things by putting pressure on the government in Kabul. This government did not control its own territory and its own subjects in the frontier areas.

This same set of problems confronted the Russians after their withdrawal from Chechnya following Chechen victories in 1996. The Russians pulled out completely (rather than trying, as a minimum, to retain some sort of "security zone" in northern Chechnya) because they believed that the Chechen commander, General Aslan Maskhadov—a former Soviet artillery colonel with whom Russia had been negotiating the previous year via the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe—would prove an effective leader and would pursue a policy of pragmatic cooperation with Russia. Unfortunately, while Maskhadov did indeed win presidential election in January 1997 with almost two-thirds of the vote, the destruction, militarization and brutalization caused by the war, together with Chechen traditions of resistance to authority and of raiding, meant that it proved completely impossible to create any kind of effective Chechen state. Instead, Chechnya became the base for a great wave of kidnapping and raiding into surrounding Russian territory. Even more menacingly, a strong group of international Islamic revolutionaries (led by a Saudi Arabian who had fought in Afghanistan) established itself in Chechnya and formed an alliance with Chechen warlords. The group's explicit intention was to launch a *jihad* to drive Russia from the northern Caucasus, and in August 1991 it did indeed invade the neighboring Russian republic of Dagestan, leading to the second Russian attempt to reconquer Chechnya.[6]

By 1999 the great majority of Chechens were bitterly hostile to both the Muslim radicals and the Chechen warlords—or, at least, that was the view of the Chechen refugees with whom I spoke in December of that year. The casualties inflicted by Russian bombardment have also bitterly alienated most Chechens—just as the civilian casualties inflicted by U.S. troops in Mogadishu infuriated even those Somalis who loathed Farrah Aideed.

Unavoidable Conflicts

WHILE THE United States could withdraw from Somalia without any great cost beyond damaged pride, there was clearly no way that in the long term Russia or any other modern state could tolerate the existence on its own frontier of the kind of threats that Chechnya represented from 1996–99. In other words, although there has been much to condemn in Russian policy and tactics, it is

[6]For the background to the invasion, see my "Nightmare in the Caucasus", *The Washington Quarterly* (Winter 1999).

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also true that Russia was faced with a dilemma that we would do well to study.

Critics will say that the United States can always avoid such conflicts by simply refusing to get involved in them, but to assume that this will always be possible would be outrageously complacent. A country that would spend tens of billions of dollars to create a missile shield to help save North Korea from committing suicide, while failing to prepare for urban and partisan warfare, would in all likelihood be regarded by future generations as having established new parameters for both paranoia and irresponsibility. Apart from anything else, such an outlook would require the assumption that our leaders will never make mistakes or engage in reckless military deployments—a rather optimistic assumption, given the historical record.

After all, U.S. administrations did not *intend* that U.S. troops should be blown up in Beirut, shot to pieces in Mogadishu, or face a possible ground war in Kosovo. And quite apart from the likelihood of blunders, there may at some stage also be real and inescapable reasons to intervene in areas of vital U.S. interest—for example, in the Persian Gulf or Central America. Terrorism may also compel such interventions, especially if at some stage terrorists gain access to weapons of mass destruction. The existence of states that foster or tolerate terrorism has led the United States in the last fifteen years to bombard targets in Libya, Afghanistan and Sudan, and the latest attack on the U.S.S. *Cole* has elicited vows of retaliation from U.S. leaders. In the former Soviet Union, terrorist actions helped lead Russia into its second invasion of Chechnya and are becoming a source of Uzbek intervention in neighboring states. This is the down side of the "global village": that it does indeed contain universal threats and requires a measure of universal policing.

No army—least of all that of the world's hegemonic superpower—can assume that it will not have to fight in cities. Since the beginning of recorded time, cities have been the seat of government, wealth and military power, and armies have had to besiege and capture them. Today, as more and more of the world's population lives in cities and the cities themselves continue to expand, it would be simply ludicrous to draw up any military strategy that did not have urban warfare as a major component.

But if anything, U.S. armed forces (with the exception of the Marines) are adapting less, rather than more, for operations on the ground involving relations with hostile or potentially hostile local populations. Useful strides are being taken in producing equipment for urban warfare, but there will always be a limited degree to which weaponry can compensate for the risks, the brutality and the moral ugliness of this kind of fighting.[7]

Moreover, as the British have discovered in Northern Ireland, even in a small territory, successful armed policing operations require very large numbers of men. In Kosovo—also a very small territory—sheer lack of manpower has been partly responsible for the failure of the NATO forces adequately to protect the Serbian minority from their Albanian neighbors. When it comes to high-technology weaponry, most of the political talk of the U.S. military's unpreparedness is nonsense; but when it comes to the inadequacy of present manpower levels for repeated and prolonged emer-

[7]For a trenchant critique of the increasing cultural unpreparedness of the U.S. armed forces for ground warfare, see Williamson Murray, "Military Culture Does Matter", *Strategic Review* (Spring 1999); and Murray, "Clausewitz Out, Computer In: Military Culture and Technological Hubris", *The National Interest* (Summer 1997).

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gency deployments, it is only too accurate.

Perhaps most important of all are the intellectual and cultural weaknesses of Western armed forces in general, and U.S. forces in particular, when it comes to the armed policing of alien societies. In part, this factor reflects worries about suffering heavy casualties among ground troops, and (to a lesser extent) about using ground troops to inflict heavy casualties on civilians—as may well be unavoidable on occasion. As well, it reflects the sheer lack of knowledge and insight that is inevitable when officers and officials go into a place on six or even three-month contracts—the norm for Western officials in Kosovo. Old-style Western colonial officials had their faults, God knows, but they did at least spend their entire working lives in the countries they were governing.

Misplaced Rationality

THE PASSIONATE desire of so many U.S. military thinkers to believe in the efficacy of air power alone reflects an equally passionate desire to avoid thinking about this kind of issue. Perhaps almost as important as the fear of casualties is the desire to impose order on warfare, which is alien to the essentially chaotic and irrational nature of war itself, but which appeals to old tendencies in the military mind and military culture. These tendencies have only been strengthened by the computerization of the U.S. military machine, with its impression of control, rationality, cleanness and distance.

From this point of view, one is concerned to learn of the U.S. Army's intention to rely on the RAND Corporation to help draw up some kind of "general doctrine" of urban warfare. While a purely military doctrine concerning methods of isolating and storming a city may well be useful, it should already be obvious to the U.S. military that the great majority of future urban operations will not be straightforward military battles like Stalingrad, but will involve strong elements of politics and partisan warfare. Given the enormous differences between societies, a universal doctrine would be of little use. The key factors must be a willingness to learn from experience and to listen to outside advice as needed. Today the best teachers of the U.S. military concerning urban warfare would be former Vietcong, Somali and Chechen urban fighters—and they are not impossible to find. Yet it seems that too many members of the military hierarchy and its advisers have learned nothing and forgotten everything from Vietnam. The reason for this is not individual foolishness, but the military's very nature as a modern, Western, "rational", bureaucratic machine—together, of course, with deep Western cultural and social trends.

According to Christopher Coker,

> In the course of the twentieth century, even the vocational worlds which included war became increasingly bureaucratized. Soldiers became technicians. The nuclear age required the military to become more bureaucratic in their thinking than ever before. The main virtues of bureaucracy, predictability and consistency, were especially valued by the military in the nuclear era. No wonder the generals came to hate their own profession.[8]

Quite frankly, a career spent climbing up the ranks of an ordered, hierarchical, obedient military bureaucracy in peacetime may equip a man for the technical and organizational aspects of warfare, but it is often an extremely poor psychological and intellectual preparation for

[8]Coker, "Post-Modern War", *Journal of the Royal United Services Institute* (June 1998), p. 38.

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any sort of command in the field. It naturally tends to diminish a capacity for flexibility and improvisation; to encourage a belief in and liking for what in these pages Andrew Bacevich has called "stylized warfare"; and to produce what Ralph Peters, a retired officer and leading military thinker, has unkindly referred to as "Stepford Officers."[9] That is why every revolution or national upheaval has thrown up men like Leon Trotsky or Shamil Basayev who, with no formal military education at all, prove much better commanders than most "professionals."

This tendency toward military theorizing and planning is, of course, linked to very real and immensely useful advances in technology. But it can also be seen as linked to wider developments in the intellectual and academic sphere, one aspect of which is "rational choice theory." Indeed, this discipline has had a direct link to the military, through its role in the formulation of the theory and practice of strategic games and weapons development for major war. In this limited respect, its role has been a useful one. There are, however, two major dangers that rational choice theory poses to the military. These are in essence the same dangers that have been noted in the application of rational choice theory to international relations.

The first is the illusion of complete control and understanding, encouraged both by the supposedly mathematical and "scientific" basis of the approach, and by the supposedly limited number of possible developments and outcomes. This has obvious analogies to the belief in military circles in complete understanding through technological surveillance and analysis. As has been pointed out by Stephen M. Walt and others, rational choice theory is seriously out of sync with the reality of international relations, especially in times of rapid change, insecurity and crisis. It is really only suited to periods when the international situation is settled and orderly, and when the number of actors is limited, is made up of known states and state leaderships, and does not include new and unpredictable non-state forces acting "from below."

This, of course, makes it even less appropriate to warfare and, above all, to internal civil wars involving numerous players whose ultimate allegiance and intentions are sometimes unknown even to themselves. Thus, observation technology would not have been especially useful at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485, where the key issue was not the strength or weaponry of the opposing forces of King Richard III and Henry Tudor, but the intentions of a third, uncommitted force—that of Lord Stanley, who did not make up his mind until after the battle had actually been joined. Bosworth has almost exact parallels in the dilemmas of Russians trying to deal with Chechen warlords of uncertain loyalties who are capable of shifting from one side to another without warning.

The second weakness of rational choice theory is its rootedness in a particularly narrow version of late twentieth-century American culture—limited even in American terms because, after all, there are streets not ten blocks from Columbia, Yale or the U.S. Congress whose inhabitants have a better natural understanding of how things work in Mogadishu or Grozny than do most international affairs experts. As Chalmers Johnson and E.B. Keehn have noted, "this ideological orthodoxy is almost surely one of the less pleasant, unintended consequences of the

[9]The reference is to Ira Levin's novel of mass-produced zombie suburbanites, *The Stepford Wives*. For the threat from modern irregular forces, see Peters' seminal essay, "The New Warrior Class", *Parameters* (Summer 1994).

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end of the Cold War and Americans' perceptions that they 'won' it."[10]

Inadequate even to explain the behavior of many modern states (the United States included), rational choice as defined by its U.S. practitioners is comically, grotesquely irrelevant to the behavior of people from radically different cultures. In terms of American educated middle-class behavior, there was nothing at all "rational" about the actions of the Chechen fighters I met in 1994–96, or of the Somalis who immolated themselves during the U.S. intervention.

The influence of rational choice theory tends to make Western analysts and planners poorly equipped to understand such societies. This is not just because of intellectual narrowness and prejudice, but because, by encouraging concentration on supposedly universal, "scientific" bases of analysis, it discourages students and career-makers from developing knowledge of local cultures and languages. This weakness is of special importance among armed forces whose strategy involves not the seeking of decisive battle, but less direct ways of bringing the enemy to surrender—for such a strategy is critically dependent on good political intelligence and analysis.

In armies that have had to fight ground wars at regular intervals, the influence of experienced fighting soldiers counteracts to some extent that of the military bureaucrats and technicians. It provides a continual reminder that the qualities which go to make up a good fighter are not necessarily those taught in formal military courses; and that in war there is always the possibility of a clash escaping the control of commanders and becoming a "soldiers' battle", in which what really counts is a mixture of tactical skill, discipline, flexibility, quickness of decision, coolness under fire, endurance and courage. The U.S. military has always been able to relearn these virtues when it had to, but it is a pity that this often happened so late, and that it was so often our enemies who were the teachers. □

[10]Johnson and Keehn, "A Disaster in the Making: Rational Choice and Asian Studies", *The National Interest* (Summer 1994), and the polemical debate with J. Mark Ramseyer in the following issue.

The vice to which great powers easily succumb in a multipolar world is inattention; in a bipolar world, overreaction; in a unipolar world, overextension.

—Kenneth Waltz, *International Security* (Summer 2000)

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Human Nature and Human Rights

Robin Fox

IN THE CLOSING months of his presidency, Bill Clinton and some of his entourage have taken to using the buzzphrase "human and political rights" to replace the simpler "human rights." A call to the White House press office produced no explanation of the coinage, but assured me that "no policy change was implied." It's always nice to know that it is business as usual.

One would like to think that some sense of the paradoxes and complications of the term "human rights" had come home to the administration, and that in consequence it was on its way to even more qualifications: perhaps "human, political, economic, legal, cultural, national, sexual and domestic rights." This may be too much to hope for, but one gets the impression that President Clinton has meant to restrict "human" to "personal and family" and so needs to tack on "political" to cover all those "rights" that are to do with the wider society and participation in it. But what does this mean? That political rights are not human? That "human" has to do only with our persons and families? Whatever happened to "natural rights", which traditionally used to cover all of the above?

So much has now been written about "human rights" that, like President Clinton, we tend to lose our perspective and get confused. As with the classic issue of "natural rights" before it, the debate becomes so infused with passion that straight thinking is almost impossible. Argument about rights of one sort or another is both possible and desirable, particularly given the current penchant for using "human rights" as a basis for often quite brutal foreign policy decisions. But we have to recognize that putting "human" in front of "rights"—when, for example, talking of the "human right" of people to free elections—is simply to use a warm hurrah word as a rhetorical device. In the same way, wars of political suppression become "humanitarian interventions", and anything we do not currently happen to like becomes "unnatural", even if it is something as basically human as the hunting of game animals or investment in multiple spouses.

Both "human" and "natural" do have a real content, and we can identify that content. Given the all-too-free use of these terms, perhaps we should ask ourselves what that content might be. The trouble is that we have used them as hurrah words for so long, that we balk at any result that is not consonant with our current enlightened prejudices. *We* want to

Robin Fox is University Professor of Social Theory at Rutgers University. His most recent book relevant to this subject is *Conjectures and Confrontations: Science, Evolution, Social Concern* (Transaction Publishers, 1997).

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define what is natural; we do not want nature to do it for us, for the result might not be pretty.

Thus, if anyone were to make an argument, however logical, coherent and backed by evidence, that there was no natural or human right to vote, for example, he would not be answered so much as ridiculed and condemned as reactionary and anti-humanitarian. Yet a respectable argument could indeed be made that there is nothing in nature, or certainly in the nature of being human, that demands the right to vote as such. That right is not so much a natural or human right as one contingent on the fairly advanced economic and political development of certain civilizations. This is probably the sort of thing Clinton has in mind when he adds political to human in the rights catalogue.

The natural/human right might be phrased as "a right to a say in the affairs of one's group." How such participation in group decision-making is to be ensured, however, is not defined by anything in nature or humanity. Voting only becomes an issue at a certain sophisticated level of political development. It may be possible to argue that at such a level everyone has a right to vote (although exceptions will rapidly be listed—children, lunatics, felons, peers, exiles, non-residents, resident non-citizens, non-property owners, unregistered persons), but such a right is scarcely natural or human. It is more properly cultural, or social and political, deriving from the nature of government so achieved rather than from facts of nature or humanity.

On the other hand, a very good argument could be made, using basic kin selection theory, that there is a natural and human right to revenge. If someone kills my nephew or grandson, he robs me of a proportion of my inclusive fitness, that is, the strength of my personal gene pool. To redress this imbalance, it could be argued, I have the right to inflict a similar loss on him. I should be allowed to deprive him of someone related to him. This could be satisfied by killing two of his first cousins, or any such combination that would level the balance sheet. It is remarkable that many systems of vengeance in human society seem implicitly to observe the logic of inclusive fitness. They do not, for example, necessarily prescribe that I kill the person responsible: one of his kin or clan will do just as well.

This system of vengeance is less efficient as a redress than a system whereby I would get to impregnate one of the perpetrator's females, thus forcing him to raise to viability a person carrying my own genes. Actually, in the example cited this would amount to overcompensation, since I would gain by half to a loss of one-quarter. It would be more exact if my brother were allowed to make the impregnation, thus restoring the exact balance. Either method is of course impractical given intertribal or clan hostility, but note how ubiquitous is the practice of impregnating captive women or the women of defeated rivals. The advancing Russian forces in World War II made a massive effort to redress the imbalance caused by German depredations during Operation Barbarossa. Russian genes are now being nurtured by the Federal Republic's economic and welfare systems on a vast scale.

I probably do not have the right to demand that any superordinate entity carry out this vengeance for me (although I may call on supernatural agencies, and will commonly use sorcery to harm an offender). In strict fitness theory I am bound to redress my own wrongs and either succeed or fail, thus determining my own ultimate fitness in terms of the genes that I, and those who have genes in common with me through descent, contribute to the pool. Perhaps the most basic claim we have against a collective

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entity is that it leave us alone to settle our affairs. It is generally observed, however, that as human societies evolve, many of the self-help functions are delegated to some superordinate authority.

This is the essence of the social contract: for the sake of harmony within the group, certain basic rights to individual action are delegated to the group itself. Hence, compensation comes to substitute for vengeance. Again, this is often framed in reproductive terms: compensation for a murdered man is that which will enable his kin to raise another child to replace him. In many systems before the advent of the monopolistic state, there was no question of personal retribution through the execution of the murderer. Just compensation, which would enable the genetic replacement of the victim, was considered sufficient. This can be seen as a humanitarian advance in human morals, or as a retrograde step depriving individuals of the right of vengeance, but either way there is no question that it preserved the idea of redressing the genetic imbalance caused by a human-activated death. The monopolistic state, however, declares that there is no individual right to vengeance, and reserves that right to itself. Thus the state exacts retributive justice, but leaves the kin of the victim without compensation, and the imbalance permanent. It is not clear how this is an improvement on the older systems of self-help or compensation ("blood money").

The Woody Allen Question

IT DOES, however, raise an interesting question: At a certain point of development in human social complexity, does the collectivity acquire "human rights" over the individual? This is important because so much of the above-mentioned writing on human rights assumes them to be by definition *individual* rights. This often goes to the length of seeing no rights as inhering in any collectivity—except, perhaps, the family—and even as seeing the collectivity as the automatic enemy of human rights. Such rights are almost by definition rights *against* the state. But there have always been human collectivities; we are, as F.H. Bradley observed, following Darwin, following Aristotle, a rootedly social animal. In fact, Bradley argued, we could show that individuals did not exist: the social was real and the individual the abstraction. Take away from any so-called individual everything contributed to his nature and person by society (starting with the genetic contribution of his parents, grandparents and so forth) and what is left? Nothing. The whole idea of rights being peculiar to individuals only becomes possible with self-conscious creatures, of which humans are the only example.

What sense does it make to attribute individual rights to ants? Woody Allen's neurotic worker, oppressed by the collective morality of the colony in the movie *Antz*, is only funny because it is impossible: an anthropomorphizing of the ant condition. But it is interesting because that is precisely what has happened in the human situation. A mammal living in socially complex colonies, like baboons or chimpanzees, suddenly (in evolutionary terms) became conscious of its own condition, probably by evolving powers of speech with which to talk about it. Baboons cannot have individual rights any more than ants. They simply do what they have to do to be baboons and produce more baboons. But once a primate is conscious of its condition, then it can start to ask the Woody Allen type of question: "Why must I always do the things the group wants to do? Why can't I decide for myself what is good for me?" In this way it can formulate the notion first of "individuals" and then of certain things owing to individuals: just as the group has a "right" to a territory, so an individual has a "right"

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to . . . the answer is pretty much anything it can think up. Once started on this delusional pathway there is ultimately no limit except that of the imagination.

The individual "rights" that a primitive, self-conscious, but of necessity group-living primate would claim would of course be based on its individual needs to feed and procreate successfully. But it is important to note that at this level the need to claim rights over the demands of the group would not arise, since the group would be the individual's inclusive kinship network. All individuals feed, struggle for dominance, mate and raise young. In this process, the existence of the group is a necessity like the existence of natural resources. Individuals will make altruistic sacrifices for the group since it is essentially a group of kin, and thus represents the repository of their inclusive fitness. There is no way in which the small group of relatives could be seen as somehow having different interests from those of the individuals composing it. In Bradleyan terms, there could be no distinction between the society and the individual.

A Profoundly Unfair Process

AS LEVELS of social complexity increased after the Neolithic revolution, some 10,000 years ago, organisms would increasingly be dealing with (relative) genetic strangers who made demands on them in the name of social units whose genes were not identical by descent with theirs. It is at this stage that true conflict would have occurred, as organisms started to feel the need to assert their "rights"; that is, the things they needed to do in order to ensure their fitness: the means of reproduction.

In a strict sense, this is the upper limit of the natural or human claims that an organism (read: individual) can have against any collectivity of genetic strangers. It is the area Clinton seems to have in mind when using "human." It is a claim based on the functional necessities of reproductive competition. It cannot be a claim to reproduce successfully, only a claim to be allowed to compete for reproductive success. It is not a claim for fairness: something that Rawlsians would like to write into the "original position." Natural selection is a profoundly unfair process; indeed, that is the point of it. Some start with a genetic advantage over others; all men are not created equal. But all have a right to play their hands to the best of their ability. The group has no obligation to level the playing field unnaturally, but it has an obligation to let the players play.

So we might say that the only basic human rights are those that allow individuals to compete in the reproductive struggle. These would be rights of access to potential mates, and to the resources needed to acquire, hold and breed with them; and the right to raise offspring to viability. (This would underline the claim that the right to "equality" refers to equality of opportunity, not equality of outcome. The outcome has to be unequal or natural selection would not take place.) We could speak of a "human right to procreate", although I would prefer to state it as the "right to engage in reproductive competition." For it is important that we recognize these basic human rights not as claims to some kind of benevolence or handouts from the collectivity (even though we may decide such benevolence is due for other reasons). They are claims to be allowed to take part in the reproductive struggle. Insofar as we fail, we fail, and as long as we were not artificially restricted in our attempt we have no cause for complaint.

To take a currently contentious issue: Is there a "human right" to free choice of one's marriage partner? (I am sure Clinton would regard this as a "human" and not a "political" right.) To those of us

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reared in a relentlessly individualistic society, such a right seems obvious and basic. But it is so only in such a society. In a society where the clan or extended family is the basic unit—and note that this itself is the basic "human" unit—then it is equally obvious that such a choice is too important to be left to individual whim. What is at stake is the continuing reproductive success of a group of genetically close individuals. The parents of any potential couple carefully monitor the match in light of the probability of a successful reproductive outcome. In doing so, they are acting not only in protection of their own inclusive fitness, but also, in terms of their greater experience and predictive ability, in protection of that of the young couple.

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And Cain rose up against Abel and violated his civil rights.

There is nothing either unnatural or inhuman here. On the contrary, our attitude of allowing whimsical affections and passions to decide the choice of partner, with the often subsequent consequences of divorce, step-parent abuse, one-parent family problems and the like, can be seen as inhuman, unnatural and reprehensible. But so high in our value system have we elevated individual choice that it appears to us simply "self-evident" that arranged marriage is unthinkable. It is an infringement of "human rights." It may be an infringement of something, and there may indeed be good moral arguments against it, but the "human rights" argument will not wash.

You might counter that I have just said that the group should not interfere with the right to compete for reproductive success. But in the case just cited it does not do so. Rather, it seeks to *reinforce* the chances of individual reproductive success, and we could forcefully argue that the group has the "human right" to do so. Societies with arranged marriages are easily out-reproducing those with free choice, despite the access to better medical care, sanitation and nutrition in the latter. There is nothing in the "laws of nature" that says the kin group (the pool of genes related by descent) should not seek to enhance the reproductive success of its members. On the contrary, it should seek to do so, since individuals—given imagination, intelligence and free will, and hence the capacity for delusion—as often as not act against their reproductive self-interest.

Thus, non-kin collectivities, while certainly often acting against the interests of their members, will also often move in to prevent at least self-destructive behavior that might injure individual reproductive success: drug misuse, suicide, child abuse, infanticide or abortion. More positively, they support those whose behavior has reduced their chances of raising children to viability. Monastic institutions in the Middle Ages, while manned by celibate "brothers and sisters", were homes for a staggering number of otherwise doomed infants deposited by those unable to support them. Social welfare systems operate on the same principle: although we have no natural right to their assistance, they have a natural right

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to assist us. Here non-kin collectivities are taking over the functions that originated, and have their logic, in the kin group. If we support them and they support us it is because of a natural extension of mutuality from the "original position" of kin support.

It is in the interest of a nation, for example, that it reproduce itself. It tends, in its delusional-ideological system, to pass itself off as a super kin group. At the primitive level of evolving humanity (99 percent of our existence as a species) there was no need for such pretense. The kin group was, in essence, the social collectivity. This is why I have argued above that at the most basic, and hence most "human", level there would be no "rights" issue. In promoting the success of near kin we are promoting the success of our own genes (or, more correctly, they are using us to promote their success).

Still within the purview of basic kin selection theory, we have another human right: the right to nepotistic assistance. We have the right both to assist close kin and to receive assistance from them in the pursuit of our own reproductive success. Until the advent of meritocratic bureaucracy, the world lived by this principle. It is what "kinship" is all about: all those gentes, clans, sibs, septs, moieties, phratries, lineages, houses, kindreds and extended families. There is no human society that does not map out, often in alarming detail, its universe of kin, the better to calculate the degree and kind of help and obligation expected. The term nepotism, from the Latin *nepos* (grandson, sister's son), was first invented to describe the hypocritical (but most certainly "natural") tendency of prelates either to favor their nephews or to hide their illegitimate sons under the nepotic title. In another stunning reversal of natural values, we have now made it one of the worst crimes against "equality"—which it most assuredly is. This does not prevent us, though, at all levels of society up to the very top, from wallowing in the hypocrisy. The most basic feature of social evolution is not so easily defined away.

The point of the above examples is to make us wary of a free and easy use of the terms "human" and "natural." It is not to say that there are no other rights than those that exist in some guttural, shambling, scavenging state of proto-human existence. Of course there are. But we should be more careful in the logical underpinning we choose to give to these rights, if for no other reason than that we render the terms meaningless and empty and rob them even of rhetorical value.

Also, as we have seen, human rights may be rights to all kinds of behaviors that our sophisticated and sensitive liberal natures may abhor. Hunting is a good example, given the current threat in England to ban fox hunting on "humanitarian" grounds, which seem to have more to do with puritanical objections to the hunters' enjoyment than with the supposed suffering of the fox. A very good case could be made that the "right to procreate" (which has now been established in U.S. common law) includes the right to polygamy (polygyny and polyandry) for those who can afford it and want it. Why should the state—on grounds that are always fuzzy and derive largely from religious prejudice—limit the number of spouses? The overwhelming majority of human societies (approximately 85 percent) have allowed or enjoined polygamy. Again, the "advanced" societies have reversed this tendency, which is wholly "natural" in a sexually competitive species of large land mammals with moderate sexual dimorphism and late-maturing young. As with the Romans, the argument for monogamy is egalitarian. But as we have seen, nature is not egalitarian: if

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some succeed and some fail in the polygamy stakes, then the same is in fact true of monogamy, where some will always outbreed others. And yet again, the monogamous societies, while banning multiple marriages as "unnatural", hypocritically allow all kinds of multiple *mating*—serial monogamy being the most common example in modern Western society.

It is a pretty safe bet that almost anything we have condemned as "unnatural" is something that we know will flourish if we leave it alone. For if something is natural we have no need to buttress it with sanctions; it will take care of itself.

Nature's Neutrality

WHAT, THEN, should we call these rights that are not basic, natural or human, but which we "know" to be desirable? (Thus we may not know what human rights are, but we certainly know when we have lost them.) Surely, you say, we should not give in to relativism and suggest that they are simply local preferences without universal validity. At least I hope you are saying that, because that pernicious doctrine has achieved a sinister grip among the scribbling classes. It is perhaps strange that the triumph of relativism should come at the same time that the pursuit of "human rights issues" has come to dominate international affairs and foreign policies. Yet the two trends are not unrelated. In a world of relativistic morals, we would have no basis for attacking offenders against "rights" if these could be dismissed as mere cultural preferences. We therefore have to underpin certain rights as "human" to stress their universality. If they pertain to all humans—on what grounds is not always clear—then they are impervious to the relativist's objection. What is truly strange is that a good many theory-befuddled academics and activists hold both views at the same time, lauding relativism in defense of "multicultural" agendas while denouncing, say, female circumcision as contrary to "universal human rights." Logic is usually the first fatality in ideological warfare.

The cherished rights enshrined in the Constitution, the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the UN Charter and human rights declaration, and all the treaties and commissions up to the Helsinki Accords and the establishment of the International Criminal Court—all of these are highly evolved political and social rights that derive from the Western Enlightenment tradition, with its basic values of equality and universalism. Many of them are peculiar to the Christian tradition. Despite attempts to base these rights on "nature", in most cases they—by their very design—either run counter to nature or, at best, concern things about which nature is strictly neutral.

We have looked at some of the former. As examples of the latter we might suggest that "nature" gives us no clues about what form certain institutions might take, only about the rules of engagement, as it were. We should be able to accrue resources so as to take part in the reproductive struggle. But exactly how we should accrue those resources (whether they include that Enlightenment favorite, "property", for example), to what lengths we should go to prevent others (our reproductive rivals) from accruing them, and to what extent we should assist our close kin by passing resources to them—on all these matters nature is silent. The winners will be rewarded, but they will be rewarded if they cheat as well as if they play fair. They will be rewarded if they kill and torture, if that is what gets more of their genes into the pool. They will be reward-

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ed if they cooperate, if that is what gets it done. We can see that some behaviors will be self-defeating—too many cheaters will leave too few suckers—and probably self-limiting as a strategy in the long run. But in the short run, a cheater can perfectly well manage a respectable score in the inclusive fitness stakes. We still celebrate the con man and the huckster, and especially deride the cuckold. The law may take one view, but popular opinion is not fooled.

Inclusive fitness theory—preserving and enlarging one's personal gene pool—is only one way into the issue of what is basically human. I have taken it here simply as an example. Take another approach, say, the findings of psychology into the basic list of human motivations. Certainly we shall find some that suit our warm and compassionate version of "human", but there will be a list of others that we would not want on any list of things to be fought for and protected and promoted.

Take again those things we have in common with our nearest animal relatives, the chimpanzees, whose genetic material is 98 percent our own. There is the warm and fuzzy list all right, but there is also, as Jane Goodall discovered to her warm-hearted horror, warfare, genocide, cannibalism, homicide, female beating, infanticide, violence, domination and more.

Take, say, those features that have been found common to all human societies by comparative ethnography. Once again, the list of saintly characteristics is overbalanced by the dark features that seem so inescapably human. It is a pure act of judgment to say that the dark features, all of which can be shown to have contributed to survival, are to be regarded as less "human" than the ones we have selected as worthy of promotion. And there will be yet others that have served survival purposes and are regarded as benign by even a majority—and have been so regarded throughout history—such that in our enlightened judgment they must be added to the list of the truly human.

Aspirations, Not Needs

SO WHERE are we left with our rights problem? Does it really matter if the term "human" is wrongly applied to rights? It does, because this is an area that is too important for us to indulge in systematic self-delusion. We are moving into a period when the pursuit of "human rights issues" is filling the vacuum in foreign policy left by the disappearance of clear-cut "national interest" issues (for example, Robin Cook's much-touted "ethical foreign policy" for the UK). This has already been the excuse for us to break the rules of international behavior established in the "national interest" period, to bomb a sovereign nation into submission and kill at least one thousand people. This stance threatens to start another and more deadly war with China. It is moralistic, self-righteous and aggressive. It is dangerous as well as hypocritical in its selective action. Yugoslavia was in the end massively bombed to preserve "the credibility of NATO." How useful that "human rights" could be invoked as a cynical justification. (See also the human and "national" rights of Kuwaiti sheiks that were so gallantly protected in what otherwise might have seemed to be an old-fashioned war to protect our vital oil interests.) And given the moral state of our politicians, this is about all we can expect.

Robert Benchley was of the opinion that whenever a government began shouting "spies!" it was inevitably trying to divert attention from its own shady business. Perhaps we can be forgiven for suspecting something of the sort when we hear politicians chanting the mantra

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of "human rights"—usually to cover some hypocritical, and inevitably blundering, manipulation of the UN by the powers in the Security Council.

Given the inevitable skepticism about governmental honesty (or at least competence), we should at the very least insist on being clear about what we are doing and on what grounds we are doing it. We should not take action on the grounds that what we are supporting or suppressing is in some sense essentially "human", when it is no such thing. A great deal of what is human is in fact what is at the root of what we are opposing, suppressing, killing and destroying in the name of human rights. To achieve the kind of world envisioned in the treaties, charters and commissions, we must indeed suppress and destroy—or at the very least control—human nature. We are not acting for it, we are acting against it, or we are supplementing it in those cases where it gives us no guidance. As Katherine Hepburn said to Humphrey Bogart in *The African Queen*: "Human nature, Mr. Allnut, is what we are put on this earth to rise above."

Human rights theorists are often quite honest about this. They disclaim any attempt to base these rights on human nature or human needs and define them as "the best to which we can aspire", or as based on "a moral vision of a dignified human life." This is fine, but it is not then plausible to claim at the same time that these rights are "based on the very fact of being human." They are not; they are based on the fact of individuals being trapped in oppressive collectivities. This is why they must, by definition, be individual rights.

There is nothing wrong with defining rights in terms of high human aspirations, but they will then require a very different justification from rights based on human needs. They involve, in effect, a purely teleological justification: human rights become the rights we need in order to *achieve* a certain desired end state of society, not rights derived from the elusive state of true humanness. Thus rights involving inclusive fitness are more likely to be respected currently in fundamentalist Islamic societies than in Western democracies. But societies based on Islamic law are usually the ones most offensive to human rights activists.

It can be argued that human rights based on aspirations are no less human than those based on needs. But the problem is that we can aspire to virtually anything, and how do we choose between competing aspirations? Needs at least give us some criteria of arbitration, and very necessary ones, since many liberal-democratic-individualist aspirations, however laudable, have the quality we observed of running counter to basic needs and thus defeating their own objectives. Is there any point in aspiring to a state of affairs that is so inhuman that it is unsustainable, however ethically desirable? The true hair-splitters will want to argue that such impossible aspiration is also very human, and so it is; we are nothing if not a paradoxical animal.

Human Rights and the National Interest

ONE OF THE major paradoxes surrounding the human rights issue is that it became central to foreign policy as part of a deliberate strategy to protect the national interest. Human rights activists will not like this claim, of course. They prefer, as is their way, to think they are acting from nothing but the highest and purest moral considerations. But even they will admit that these explicit concerns—as opposed to a general U.S. urge to be the world's good guys—had a definite beginning in the Ford administration. They prefer, however, to forget that this stance was

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deliberately engineered by Daniel Patrick Moynihan to counter the hypocrisy of the Third World communist bloc.

Moynihan, as ambassador to the UN, was tired of just sitting there and taking it when the bloc used anti-capitalist moralizing as a basis for attacking the policies of the democracies at the behest of the USSR. So he developed the strategy of counterattacking (or even getting in the first punch) on the grounds of the abuse of "human rights" by these regimes. This brilliantly put the democracies on the attack, reversing their previously defensive stance of continual apology. It put the onus of explanation and justification on the totalitarian dictatorships and their bullyboy leaders. It was not, however, something that arose out of humanitarian concern for the benighted inhabitants of these Third World terror regimes, but out of the need to combat their governments' belligerence in the UN, and hence to curtail the influence of our major competitor.

I am not saying that anything Senator Moynihan did could have been totally cynical, but he was quite clear about the development of this as a *strategy of foreign policy* first and foremost. In *A Dangerous Place* (1978), he describes this as his "jujitsu principle": "to use the momentum of the majority against the majority." It was in the defense of the national interest and in the interest of the Western alliance. As one strategy among many to promote our collective ends, it had its place. As an excuse for foreign policy today—given the huge amount of post-Cold War military hardware available, and the compelling urge presidents and premiers seem to have to use that hardware—it deserves a close and skeptical scrutiny. This involves both a scrutiny of its practical dangers, best left to strategists, and of its theoretical underpinnings. With this latter enterprise, some otherwise useless academics can at least show that even if the emperor has new clothes, they are woven of dubious synthetic fibers. □

Knowing When to Stop

We must take care that rebellion against the very concept of limits does not become the permanent feature of the American response to international politics. For the recognition of some constraints is an attribute, perhaps the price, of maturing in societies as well as in people. . . . Mediocre societies and statesmen limit themselves to the easily attainable. Great societies and statesmen strive at the outer reaches of their possibilities. But the denial of any limits leads to exhaustion or disaster.

—Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*

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The Deconstruction of Death

The Coming Politics of Biotechnology

Fred Charles Iklé

SINCE THE eighteenth century, a succession of technological revolutions has transformed the human condition and the course of history. First, the steam engine took center stage. By the end of the nineteenth century, the multifaceted applications of electricity had begun to change the world. During the second half of the last century, computer technology transformed scientific research, economic activity, military forces and nearly every aspect of human affairs. Now the mapping of the genome[1] signals that a new wave of technology-driven change is coming.

The genome project highlights the recent progress in genetics and the other life sciences, which in turn inspires and sustains continuing advances in biotechnology. By promising to satisfy the most elemental human yearnings—the desire for good health and for the postponement of death—biotechnology attracts the kind of deep-rooted political support and strong financial backing that few other fields of science enjoy. It can therefore maintain a momentum capable of generating a stream of scientific-technological developments that governments and international organizations will find hard to control. And there is now little doubt about where this is leading: to human intervention in the process of evolution itself.

Some of these developments, it can be safely predicted, will pose new and fundamental challenges to prevailing religious doctrines and teachings. Longevity, combined with good health, is a goal that democratic governments cannot oppose. Who would want to block the path to possible eradication of hereditary sickle cell anemia, or to medications that promise a cure to Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases? But when such universally acceptable goals have been reached, science will not come to a full stop, even if religious organizations, ethics advocates or politicians should

Fred Charles Iklé is writing a book about the impact of technology on world affairs. He is affiliated with the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

[1] "Genome" is used here as a short label for the expanding, multidisciplinary scientific domain that is focused on the fundamental workings of living organisms, and that includes new technological applications to influence these life processes. The celebratory news about the genome mapping surely was justified. But efforts to construct a follow-on "map" that will explain more about the functioning of life reveal new *terra incognita*. It is not despite the success in mapping the genome, but because of it, that these new blank areas on the "map" of life are showing up. This is an old story: the more we know, the more we know what we don't know.

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want to draw a line beyond which human nature must not be altered.

The good and the bad that the era of the genome promises to bring will often be inseparable. Consider this simple example: experts predict confidently that progress in biotechnology will make it possible, probably well before the end of this century, to extend people's active life span by twenty years or more. This, most people would agree, will be a good thing. But if this prediction comes true, one consequence will be that entrenched dictators will live longer, thus postponing the leadership successions that until now have so often offered the sole means of relief from tyrannical regimes. Stalin, for one, comes to mind as a fellow who would not have volunteered to retire had his doctors been able to keep him active and fit to the age of, say, 120. If he could have benefited from the medical technology that seems likely to be available a few decades hence, he would have ruled his evil empire until just about now, and his unfortunate subjects would have suffered many more campaigns of terror. And if biotechnology could have offered Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping the same extended life span, Deng would still be waiting in the wings for an opportunity to implement his reforms.

The Genome and Globalization

GLOBALIZATION can only hasten the era of the genome. The Internet is facilitating the spread of the latest scientific discoveries in genetics and biotechnology, while the pressures for free trade are breaking down the barriers that Luddite movements erect to keep out products derived from these discoveries. When legislators in one country pass a law to prohibit an application of biotechnology that they judge to be politically incorrect, they will have to contend with the virtual certainty that other countries will happily exploit the new application. For instance, should the U.S. Congress decide to prohibit implants for human patients of organs derived from cloned sheep or pigs, Britain and Japan might allow the production and use of these "lifesaving" implants. In the long run, the approach that succeeds in offering people better health and longer lives is bound to prevail.

Democracies, however, are obliged to be tolerant of citizens who fall in love with irrational causes. For a long time, many communities in the United States fiercely rejected the fluoridation of drinking water, an intervention that had been clearly proven to reduce tooth decay without any harmful side effects. To prevail over such opposition, those promoting a technological innovation in democracies must offer benefits that a large majority of the people truly covets. To the chagrin of American producers, agricultural uses of genetic engineering have not so far met this test in Europe, and genetically modified foods remain banned there. The well-fed people in these well-to-do democracies have no desire and little tolerance for genetically altered agricultural products because they see no compelling need for "tampering" with nature. Thus, as things stand, the winning lobbies oppose innovation.

This need not be considered as tragic as the advocates of genetically modified foods now claim.[2] In the event of a serious famine resulting from a worldwide food shortage (as opposed to today's famines, which are the consequence of a maldistribution of plentiful food), the weight of political advocacy would instantly shift. (A parallel comes to mind regarding the lobbies that have managed to close down

[2]For an example of an article that bewails the European opposition, see Robert Paarlberg, "The Global Food Fight", *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2000).

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nuclear reactors. In Germany, the Greens recently forced a phase-out of all electricity-producing reactors. So Germany will have to burn environmentally harmful lignite and perhaps import electricity from unsafe nuclear reactors in Eastern Europe. For economists and other rationalizers, it is irritating that, of all people, environmentalists want to abolish clean nuclear energy and prohibit pesticide-free bioengineered foods. For the political philosopher, these quirks are accepted as just one of the smaller costs of democracy.)

The Retirement of Democracies

THE MOST widely and vigorously debated policy issue in America, Europe and Japan is not taxes, defense strategy or foreign policy, but the retirement system. Can and will the government pay for the maintenance of the steadily growing proportion of the population that is of "retirement age", and hence entitled to a lifetime annuity and largely free medical care? And who will be left to care for those with chronic degenerative diseases who cannot care for themselves?

The threshold that establishes the retirement entitlements was set a long time ago, in some European nations more than a hundred years ago. In 1882, for example, the Bismarck administration in Germany enacted retirement pensions that started at age 65, hardly budget-breaking since at that time the life expectancy at 65 was less than 9 years. In the wealthy countries, people who have reached this threshold of "old" age on the average now live five to ten years longer than at the beginning of the twentieth century; and, according to quite modest predictions about the coming advances in biotechnology, this life span will be extended another five to ten years by mid-century. Already, millions of people entitled to receive retirement pensions could continue to work productively for another five to ten years, and many do. Yet powerful interest groups, as well as the anxieties of politicians about alienating voters, block an appropriate raising of the retirement age. It will probably take an acute and painful fiscal or monetary crisis to narrow this widening gap between the changing biological facts and the unchanging political rules for "old" age.

A darker prospect also needs to be confronted. Although the average life span will increase significantly in well-to-do societies, it cannot be taken for granted that the added years will mostly be healthy ones. Too little is known today about the gains in longevity expected from progress in biotechnology to make useful forecasts about the percentage of older people that might be seriously disabled. If, unhappily, this percentage should markedly increase, the psychological, social and political consequences would be painful. With a growing proportion of a nation's citizens both retired and seriously disabled, the part of the national budget pre-empted by welfare entitlements—already a serious constraint on budgetary flexibility—would expand significantly. This, in turn, would mean that democratic governments would have fewer resources for other goals such as educating the young, national defense and foreign policy. Additionally, public attention and political energies in the democracies would increasingly be focused on these urgent new needs at home, while totalitarian and authoritarian regimes could still give priority to their militaries and to foreign adventures.

Deconstructing Death

A MISTIER question relates to the effect on a nation's psyche should biotechnology alter the aging of societies. Since antiquity, the outer limit of human life has changed

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little. What is still today understood as "old" age has been experienced in a psychological and cultural sense for thousands of years. The Roman consul and orator, Cato, died at age 86 in 149 BC; Saint Augustine died at age 75, shortly after he finished writing *The City of God*; Michelangelo was creative until close to his death, a few months shy of 89; Voltaire lived to the age of 83 and Benjamin Franklin to 84.

During a full and natural life cycle, our emotional experience—of the world around us as well as of ourselves—moves through changing seasons. In the springtime of youth, says the philosopher Michael Oakeshott, "everybody's young days are a dream, a delightful insanity, a sweet solipsism. . . . The world is a mirror in which we seek the reflection of our own desires. The allure of violent emotion is irresistible." In maturity, our emotional experience dwells longer in a single mood, and the light and shadows have harsher edges, as on a dry, hot summer day. In the autumn of our lives, our feelings and sentiments become more subdued, yet are also enriched by joys and sorrows that we recall from the past. And for those who can reach the last season in fair health, the sentiment of yearning—the mind's strongest grip on life—becomes becalmed and eventually fades.

If indeed it enables more and more people to live in good health up to age 120 or even beyond, biotechnology will alter this emotive melody of life, and thus transform the temperament of whole societies. When that happens, the nations so affected are likely to change significantly their character and behavior. For one of the lessons history has taught with painful clarity is that emotions matter a great deal in shaping political thought and action.

In the last century, youthful activists provided much of the frenzied energy of the revolutionary and quasi-revolutionary movements, both on the Right and the Left. Benito Mussolini was a master at mobilizing Italian youth and encouraged a sophisticated cult of youth, a cult celebrated by the national anthem of fascist Italy, with its "*giovinezza! giovinezza!*" as the opening cry. Similarly, today the fighting vanguards of repressive fundamentalist movements are made of teenagers and activists in their twenties. When the Taliban conquered Afghanistan, it first had the characteristics of an idealistic "student" movement. As Samuel Huntington has observed, "young people are the protagonists of protest, instability, reform, and revolution." Happily, in the last two decades of the twentieth century the historic role of youth was on balance beneficial, as throughout the Soviet empire, where young people with their enthusiasm for new moral causes and their boldness of action took the lead in toppling the tyrannies of arteriosclerotic communism. But it has not usually been so, and it is not fanciful to envisage a new cleavage opening up in the world order, aligning on one side the "bioengineered" nations, with their becalmed temperament suitable for guarding the status quo, and on the other side youthful movements zealously impatient to smash the inequities of the world.

This is not the only change in politically important emotions that biotechnology is likely to bring. It will also pose a formidable challenge to world religions, by tempting societies to employ new medical techniques for manipulating "natural" death. Biotechnology will make it safer and easier to replace failing vital organs. Eventually, an almost endless series of life-prolonging interventions will become practicable. In contrast to today's respirators, feeding tubes and permanent kidney dialyses, these interventions will be less onerous for patients, and hence likely to find more unquestioning support among the medical profession and the general public. Wealthy societies—and

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their ethical or religious monitors—will thus be faced with choices for a progressive deconstruction of death.

An unraveling of the natural end point of human life is bound to pose a challenge to the major faiths. For religious creeds, the beginning and end of an individual's earthly existence are the unambiguous boundaries drawn by God to delimit the sanctity of human life. For the Christian religion in particular, such a deconstruction of death might turn out to be more corrosive than Galileo's discoveries or Darwin's explanation of evolution. What science taught the faithful about the structure of the solar system or the evolution of humans from animal primates has since been sloughed off as a peripheral adjustment of doctrine. A science-driven deconstruction of human mortality, however, would loosen, perhaps even sever, the link between one of the most elemental human fears—the fear of death—and the edifying sentiments that the major religions have evoked for thousands of years.

Angst of Eugenics

SEVERAL nightmarish worries about the era of the genome have been circulating in academic conferences and editorials. Some of these might become serious threats in the more distant future, others are less plausible. No good case has been made, for example, to justify great anxiety about the genetic interventions that rich parents might purchase to "improve" their children. Similarly, the concept of human cloning has led to hand-wringing that exaggerates the societal impact of this rather outlandish idea. It is the angst engendered by the historic misuse of eugenics that lies behind many of these concerns, an abhorrence that became deeply implanted in modern democratic societies as they began to comprehend fully what Hitler's regime had perpetrated. Curiously, it took Sweden—that paragon of a benevolent, liberal democracy—until 1975 to halt its rather crude eugenics project. Only in 1997, after a leading newspaper revealed that thousands of sterilizations of institutionalized patients had been carried out between 1935 and 1975, did the Swedish government address this recent past (with the customary response—by appointing a commission).

The expected progress of genetics and biotechnology has now revived the angst of eugenics by lifting an idea from science fiction into the realm of the probable. This is the idea of "improving" innate human characteristics by altering the genetic make-up of the immediate offspring or, more ambitiously, of a succession of future generations. Such a project differs radically from the old type of eugenics that was held in high esteem by many British and American scientists and intellectuals a century ago (and was in favor more recently in Sweden). The earlier kind was as crude as it was simple: it halted the propagation of serious hereditary diseases or defects by preventing further offspring.

The new version, from what can be said about it at this time, does not appear to be simple, nor could it easily be proven harmless and effective. To gain a calmer perspective, those who now worry that this new eugenics might transform humanity ought to do a little arithmetic on its demographics. By the time the first few beneficiaries of genetic modifications would have survived infancy, the world's population would have increased well beyond the present six billion. Thus, by that time this kind of eugenics would have altered but a minuscule fraction of all humanity then living—rather like putting one altered grain of sand on a beach. Moreover, while with a jar of fruit flies the genetics student can observe the generational cascade of mutations within a

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few days, the generational succession of humans takes much longer and the demographic multiplication of this "grain of sand" would work quite slowly. But to know that the new type of eugenics will not trigger some catastrophic side effect in old age would necessitate monitoring the initial recipients of the treatment (who supposedly would have acquired some improved traits) for sixty years or longer. By that time, over ten billion people will be living on the planet. Unlike a jar of fruit flies, therefore, human society need have no fear of being transformed into a modern variant of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World.*

Puttering About the Brain

PROJECTS TO enhance the capacity of the human mind are likely to become even more important for mankind's future than the developments that will enable people to enjoy healthier and longer lives. To enhance a people's mental faculties, societies have traditionally pursued two complementary approaches. One uses tools that aid the human mind from the outside (pictures, written texts, an abacus, or the latest computer); the other approach strengthens the workings of the mind on the inside (by problem solving and memorizing, and with more tangible interventions such as the use of caffeine or medications to reduce learning disabilities). Although this "outside-inside" distinction is rather banal, it will help to introduce a most revolutionary prospect more gently.

Within the lifetime of today's school-age children, advances in biotechnology, neurology, cognitive psychology and other disciplines will increasingly converge to yield a deeper and richer understanding of the relationship between the functioning of the brain as a living organ, and the functioning of the human mind in all its intellectual powers. Some fifty years ago, well before these new possibilities for studying and influencing the brain had been realized, computer scientists became intrigued by the prospect of building computers that could compete with the full intellectual capacity of the human brain. This quest for "artificial intelligence" has not reached its goal. However, computer scientists have since made enormous progress in designing systems that can perform more limited but highly practical "intelligence" tasks, examples of which include recognizing and categorizing patterns, such as fingerprints, handwritten text or human speech; and translating languages. Although computers can do this work much faster and far more reliably than humans, they are inferior in coping with ambiguity and novelty, and in exercising judgment in situations where the advantages and disadvantages cannot be sorted out by pre-programmed rules.

The initial attempts to build "thinking machines" that would rival the human mind used electronic, mechanical and other lifeless components. Critics of computer-based "artificial intelligence" have long stressed that the full intellectual powers of the human mind cannot exist in a machine, but require the context and reinforcement of a living body to endow the mind with its unique powers of reasoning, judgment, intuition and creativity. More recent findings lend support to this view. The presence of emotions seems to be one of the essential ingredients that a machine lacks.

Thanks to growing knowledge about the functioning of the brain, it will become possible to integrate the computer-based assistance to human intelligence that works "from the outside" with new ways to enhance the power of the brain "from the inside", and thus to lower the barrier between the two approaches. Already, devices linked to computers have been inserted into the brain on an exploratory basis, and living

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brain tissue from animals has been inserted into computers. More important in the long term will be the substantial research effort now under way on technologies for treating diseases of the brain, such as gene therapies or the use of stem cells. Intelligence, in its diverse aspects, is surely governed by a multiplicity of genes, but this need not rule out the possibility of strengthening some important aspect of intelligence by targeting a single gene. Particularly significant in this respect would be a major enhancement of human memory. Experiments with mice have already demonstrated genetically-induced improvements in memory.

Many research projects are now under way to develop new ways of teaming brain power with computers. These projects tend to be small and draw on different scientific disciplines. They address problems of perception, memory, reasoning, consciousness, emotion and other mental phenomena. Experiments have been conducted with embryonic nerve cells from the spinal marrow of mice, kept alive by nutrient solutions, to create a neural web that emits distinct electronic signals in response to contact with different chemicals. By connecting an appropriate computer to this web, a new type of sensor can be constructed to read and categorize these signals. (One early and comparatively modest practical development of such a sensor might be the creation of sniffers capable of outperforming the specially trained dogs that customs officers use to search for narcotics and explosives.)

Proceeding along a different line, researchers at NASA's Ames Research Center have successfully tested a "biocomputer" that links a computer to an aircraft pilot by way of sensors, which pick up tiny electrical impulses from the pilot's forearm muscles and nerves. With such a system, the pilot could, without using a keyboard, directly instruct the computers that control the aircraft. The goal of this work, in the words of NASA administrator Daniel Goldin, is to develop "hybrid systems that combine the best features of biological processes" with opto-electronic and other non-organic devices.

Hundreds of such ongoing projects are reported in scientific literature today in what amounts to only a modest beginning. It seems plausible that over time such linkages of living things with computer systems will enrich the capabilities of traditional computers with some of the unique cognitive capabilities of humans or animals. Precisely because these projects are so innocuous in their stated ambitions, they can proceed and receive financial support without stirring up ethical objections or risking a government-imposed moratorium on further research. Thus, while the general public is being treated to fanciful stories about human cloning and doubling the length of human life, claims that biotechnology might double or triple the powers of the human mind have been rather restrained—among the experts in the field as well as among the popularizers.

Mr. Brain Marries Miss Computer

AN EXCEPTION TO this restraint is provided by stories about robots with superhuman skills and intelligence. Such ideas are now a mainstay of science fiction and have famous precursors in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and H.G. Wells' *The Island of Doctor Moreau.* However, most of these stories have "smart" scientists stupidly creating artifacts in the crude likeness of a human being, monsters with clumsy robot feet, husky voices and a predilection to kill or enslave their creators.

The lone mad scientist and roaming robot are not apt metaphors for the age of the genome. The human genome project is a large, international undertaking whose latest discoveries are broadcast

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daily on the Internet. As British Prime Minister Tony Blair takes care to emphasize: "We, all of us, share a duty to ensure that the common property of the human genome is used freely for the good of the whole human race." Likewise, increasingly more "intelligent" computer technologies are being marketed throughout the world by some of the most globalized businesses. This open and international scientific competition in biotechnology, computer science and other disciplines is bound to lead to a better understanding of triangular interactions between mind, brain and advanced computers. Many competent research teams will continue to explore the mysterious cohabitation of the brain and the human mind. Here, as elsewhere, competition is the motor of progress. Well before the end of this century, the technologically advanced societies might begin to debate the most tempting, but perhaps most dangerous, ambition in all of the history of science: whether to design and build an entity that would enhance the most advanced computers with biological processes and living organisms to achieve an intelligence truly superior to that of human beings today. In contrast—or in addition—to the "artificial intelligence" of computer systems, such entities would need to be capable of insight, creative discoveries, flexible learning and judgments informed by the appreciation of a changing environment and changing values.

Such a "super-brain" would of course include the vast memories and other capabilities of the best computers. But that will not be the end of it. Human thought, to be creative and purposeful, requires willpower and the subtle involvement of emotions. At the center of this dynamic there might even have to be a process that resembles the mysterious innermost sovereign of the human mind—its self-consciousness. If such a super-brain project proves capable of being started, the designers would undoubtedly try to capture these ultimate attributes of human thinking as well, at least to the extent needed for the super-brain to surpass the full panoply of human intelligence.

As of now, no one can describe the specific theoretical and technical problems that would have to be solved for this project to be started in earnest. It seems certain that it would require a large-scale interdisciplinary effort with generous financing. Today, there is no meaningful support for such a venture in any country with the scientific and engineering talents sufficient even to contemplate the first steps. This could change, however. An ambitious dictator, in control of a country strong in biotechnology and computer science, for example, could gamble on a crash project with the objective of acquiring a decisive advantage. And if testing on live human beings served to expedite the super-brain project, the more unscrupulous the ruler the greater would be his advantage over more inhibited and law-abiding governments. International treaties would not stop the ruthless, much as North Korea and Iraq have not been prevented from building nuclear and biological weapons, in clear violation of the treaty obligations they had freely assumed.

Such a turn of events would in all likelihood set in motion a "brain race." If this seems far-fetched, recall that America's costly project for the manned mission to the moon—something for which there had previously been little enthusiasm—easily received congressional support once it appeared that the Soviet Union was about to accomplish the feat first. Recall, too, that it was primarily to prevent Nazi Germany from acquiring nuclear weapons first that President Roosevelt authorized the initial steps to start the Manhattan Project late in 1941. The fear of a Nazi A-bomb was sufficient reason for the United States to launch this immense and uncertain venture, even

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though none of the scientists involved at the outset could have outlined the full research and development program that produced the first atomic bomb four years later.

The important point here is that a stream of research projects—in themselves innocuous or even beneficial—may well be moving toward such an outcome. Should the apparition of a super-brain begin to emerge from the fog of speculation—or perhaps it is more realistic to say *when* such an apparition emerges—the political debate whether or not to proceed will probably become far more convulsive than the debate after 1949 about building the H-bomb, or the contemporary disagreements about some ethically troubling uses of "gene therapies." Those who will call for a prohibition of further work on the super-brain will be derided as Luddites trying to halt scientific progress, or as wimps prepared to put their country at a political disadvantage as dangerous as that in a vital arms race. Those in favor of moving ahead will have to admit that, if the project succeeds, human civilization would be transformed more profoundly than by any of the great transitions in mankind's past.

Indeed, as the peoples of the world begin to comprehend the cosmic immensity of the project, they might start to fight with each other to deny the God-like powers of the super-brain to their enemies. In the end—like in the biblical story of the Tower of Babel—the whole project might be left in ruins. □

The Innocent Salesman

America's eagerness to 'engage' has culminated in tragedy. As that Arab-Muslim world fails and thrashes about, it directs its anger against a distant power. A furious scapegoating and ruinous anti-Americanism has become a substitute for political reform and practical politics.

A circle of sorts is closed: Two decades ago, Iran's tidal wave of protest, a revolution of a thousand discontents, saw Jimmy Carter off into a bitter political end. Today, it is the legacy of Bill Clinton that is being battered before our eyes.

That apostle of globalization had come to a conviction that he had mastered the tangled truths of the Middle East. Mr. Clinton had gone to Gaza, spoken to the Palestine National Council, bonded with Yasir Arafat, given his blessing to the emergence of a Palestinian state. The perfect salesman, he had peddled his sunny disposition, his portable belief that liberty and the American way are carried everywhere by modem and the fax and commerce.

The E-Age had dawned; the call of blood-and-soil, we declared, had been overtaken by the market and the money managers and the Web. In our innocence, we pronounced that there lay before others a simple, inescapable choice: the acquiescence in our way, or a sudden exit out of history itself.

In the streets of Ramallah and beyond, that world has now issued its terrible verdict on the diplomacy that had placed so much faith in Yasir Arafat and his willingness to accept a practical, decent peace.

—Fouad Ajami, *New York Times*, October 17, 2000

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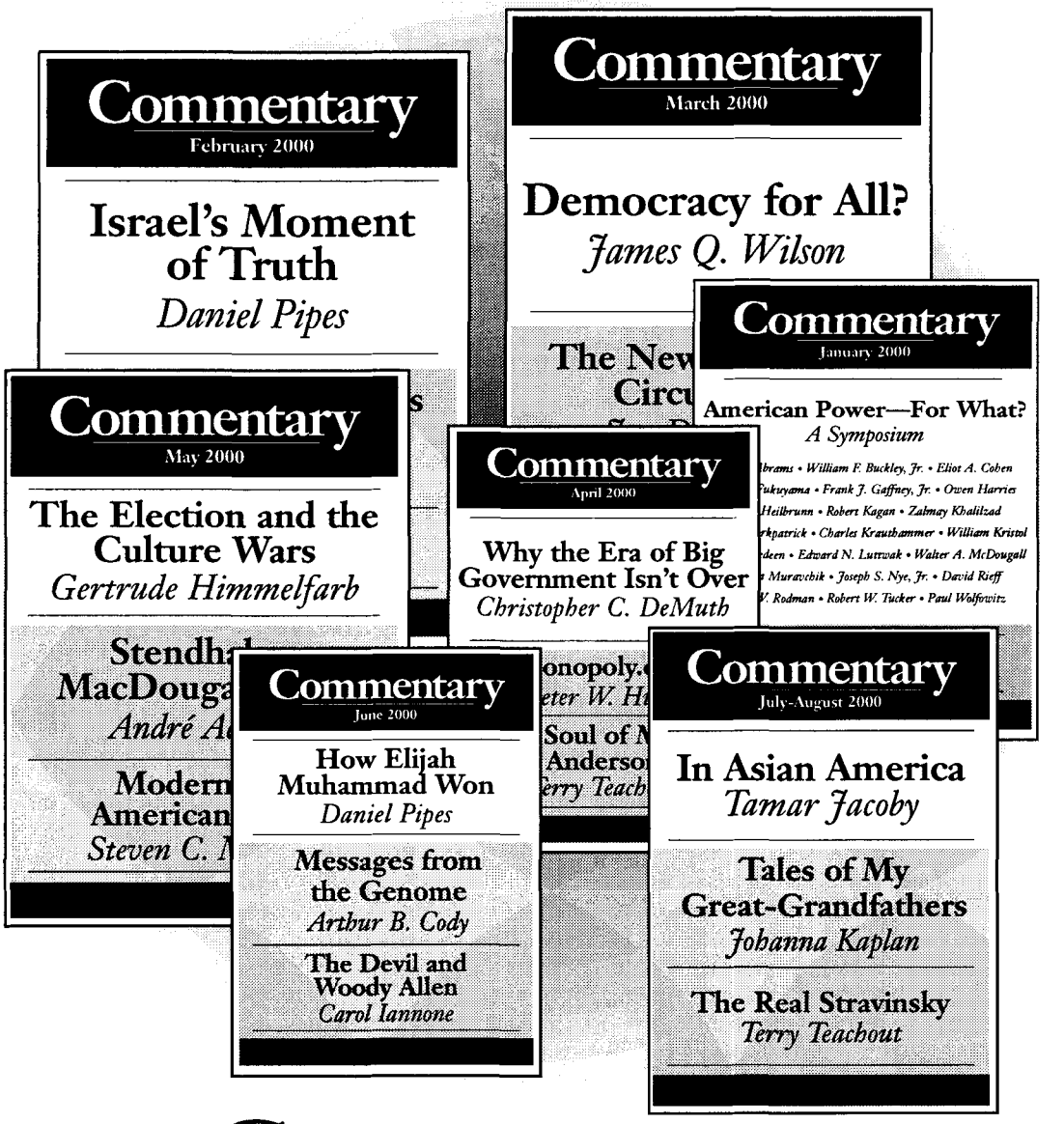
"Nothing like it."

—*A. M. Rosenthal*



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German Fictions: An Exchange

Jan-Werner Mueller, Center for European Studies, Harvard University:

FOUR years ago, Jacob Heilbrunn, writing in *Foreign Affairs*' November/December 1996 issue, advanced the notion that Germany was turning more nationalist with the rise of a "New Right" of young conservative intellectuals. Josef Joffe famously dismissed this diagnosis in a subsequent issue and complained about the fact that American observers simply could not accept a Germany that was ultimately "boring."

Now Mr. Heilbrunn has found something exciting again: German writers are illiberal, anti-American and, to boot, actually have a large influence over the German public ("Germany's Illiberal Fictions", Summer 2000). Alas, much of the argument repeats what conservatives said in Germany ten years ago, when intellectuals like Günter Grass and Jürgen Habermas were wrong-footed by unification and, almost by default, resorted to a rather crude anti-nationalism. Grass in particular subscribed to a bizarre historical determinism—according to Germany's most famous writer, a united German nation-state would automatically lead to "another Auschwitz."

But the real story is not that German writers often get it wrong—though much less often than intellectuals before 1945, a historical break that Mr. Heilbrunn seriously underestimates—but that, by and large, German intellectuals from the late 1950s onwards consciously sought to act as "democratic citizens" and advocate both the democratization and Westernization of the country. Their overreaction to unification does not detract from this achievement, but instead only proves that it was their very concerns about Westernization and democracy that made them so wary about the accession of an East Germany that seemed both anti-Western and undemocratic. Instead of idealizing East Germany, as Mr. Heilbrunn claims, they were dead scared of a Germany that seemed so much more German. But how did they get to this point, where, instead of celebrating unification, German intellectuals would suspect other Germans of being too German?

Figures like Habermas, Grass, Hans Magnus Enzensberger and Ralf Dahrendorf, to name but a few, first defined their peculiar role at the end of the 1950s and the early 1960s, and it is no accident that Habermas once called himself a member of the "generation of 1958." During this period, the building blocks for the role of the Left-liberal intellectual in West Germany were put into place. Most important, in the late 1950s the attitude toward dealing with the past slowly began to change, from the extremes of silence and defiant self-righteousness of the immediate postwar period to a new critical awareness prompted by a succession of scandals, in particular a number of anti-Semitic attacks—such as the desecration of the Cologne synagogue on Christmas Day

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1959—and the increasingly apparent failings of the judiciary in dealing with the perpetrators. At the same time, the conviction gained ground among intellectuals that Germany had been a "belated nation" in comparison with Western Europe and the United States, and that the pathologies of its history could be explained by its *Sonderweg*—a special, anti-democratic path diverging from the West.

The advocacy both of an active engagement with the past and of the Westernization of Germany became central to the role of the intellectual in the Federal Republic. Of course, this did not exclude the possibility of German intellectuals often criticizing the West themselves *de haut en bas*, which, however, stood in marked contrast to the fact that political leaders—in both East and West Germany—were overeager to please their respective superpowers. In other words, German intellectuals could still fall victim to the very anti-Western cultural pessimism that they sought to escape. But in contrast to older academics who had still dominated the early and mid-1950s, younger scholars tried consciously to define themselves in opposition to the tradition of the conservative "German mandarins" and to the illiberal Weimar intellectuals in particular. Enzensberger famously described their task as "the sanitary chore of the intellectuals after the end of fascism, the whole ideological waste disposal, a very wearisome and protracted job."

Moreover, it is simply not true historically that major West German intellectuals became fellow-travelers of East Germany. Grass, for instance, was one of the most outspoken critics of the East German regime; his only—though major—fault was that he often sought to balance criticism of the East with criticism of the West, when such a balance was misconceived in the first place. Intellectuals, while often complaining of being "homeless" or even seeing Germany as a "country of enemies", as Enzensberger put it in the early 1960s, in fact were never quite as alienated from the politics of the Federal Republic as such rhetoric suggested. While they attempted to foster what one might call a "culture of suspicion" *vis-à-vis* the new state and its representatives, they by and large did subscribe to the West German constitution—even if it was sometimes a logic of the lesser evil that led them to this stance. As Enzensberger admitted in retrospect, they were "latter-day liberals, good Social Democrats, moralists and socialists without clearly defined aims, anti-fascists without a programme for the future." Still, for all their programmatic vagueness, West German intellectuals were able to do what was indispensable for intellectuals in order to have any coherent stance at all, namely, to define one general interest, in this case democratization, to which particular criticisms could then be related.

Conceiving of themselves as a "democratic elite" or even a "democratic fire brigade", they sought to substitute for a broader critical public that was yet to develop. They aimed at fostering what they quite openly called the "re-education of the masses", as well as a sober, so-called "Anglo-Saxon model" of debate, as the very Hans Werner Richter, whom Mr. Heilbrunn maligns, put it—a model that in particular sought to avoid the polemical German tendency of turning political argument into a matter of mutual moral destruction.

Ironically, rather than unification discrediting left-wing and liberal intellectuals due to their extreme skepticism about the nation-state—as was so often predicted ten years ago—it arguably gave the "usual intellectual suspects" another lease on public life. With the addition of East Germany, the questions of democratization and Westernization that intellectuals

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like Habermas and Grass had made it their specialty to answer were back on the agenda.

Ten years after unification, however, there is a widespread sense that, while it was crucial for intellectuals to detect and denounce continuities after 1945, the old model of intellectual intervention has itself become anachronistic—due ironically to its very success in helping to make Germany a democratic Western country. It is no accident that Mr. Heilbrunn cannot name any younger writers as examples of the supposed tendencies he describes—everyone in the Walser debate, for instance, was at least sixty-five. Younger intellectuals remain conspicuously suspicious of a public role and any kind of *littérature engagée*. This is not a matter of wider "postmodern" predilections, as some observers have claimed. A fundamental dilemma is the lack of any clearly identifiable "general interest" that intellectuals could responsibly advocate—and, for all the rhetorical excesses and misguided political judgments of intellectuals after 1945, the democratization of West Germany was such an interest to which intellectuals could subscribe—as citizens, not as experts.

Like democrats in general, the democratic intellectual does not need any particular expertise. There are no "experts" in democracy, and the intellectuals' lack of expertise only proved the point that citizens needed the right attitudes, rather than particular elite knowledge. Arguably, all of this is much less true with moral disagreements about bioethics and technology, or instances of international conflict that are less ideologized than the Cold War. In these areas, which are of course also hotly debated in Germany and in urgent need of moral clarification, it is easy for a philosophical *agent provocateur* like Peter Sloterdijk to cause a storm in a teacup. But in the more serious discussions, the experts (and Sloterdijk is hardly one of them) and even the old-style cultural pessimists are back with a vengeance, while the past and ideas about "Westernization" hardly illuminate the moral and political stakes. No doubt, younger German intellectuals will have to think again—but not about Mr. Heilbrunn's periodical predictions. □

James W. Davis, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München:

MY FRIEND Jacob Heilbrunn reads German and has a number of German friends, but as his recent contribution to this journal makes clear, he neither knows nor understands contemporary Germany.

In his essay, Heilbrunn argues: 1) that the postwar intellectual Left had a "decisive influence [on] German political culture"; 2) that important members of this group have shifted to the Right, are now promoting a nationalist agenda, and have "shamelessly misused the Nazi past"; and 3) that public opinion will follow the lead of the *praeceptor Germaniae*, the literary vanguard of German identity and interests, in rejecting taboos of the past in favor of a Germany unshackled by the burdens of history. The argument is provocative and resonates well with the latent anti-German sentiments prevalent among many whose images of Germany and Germans were formed in an earlier era and prove remarkably resistant to change. It is, however, wrong.

First, the political program espoused by the Left—a neutralist, anti-capitalist

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and pacifist *Sonderweg*, was rejected both during and after the Cold War. From the Stalin Note and the Berlin Crisis to intermediate-range nuclear forces and finally reunification within NATO, Germany's political leadership rejected the calls of the intellectual Left and firmly opted for *Westbindung* (attachment to the West). Moreover, in the wake of these crucial decisions, the German citizenry repeatedly returned conservative governments to power with healthy majorities. Where is the evidence for the Left's "decisive influence"?

Mr. Heilbrunn is correct to note that Martin Walser's 1998 speech in the *Paulskirche* ignited a controversy among the literary class. Perhaps he even struck "a responsive chord" among some in the German population who resent "Jewish demands for German reparations." But such controversies are the stuff of healthy democracies, and, Walser's arguments notwithstanding, Germans have once again acknowledged the misdeeds of their grandparents and agreed to compensate survivors of Nazi Germany's slave and forced labor economy.

Heilbrunn's ignorance of the workings of contemporary German society is most apparent when he argues that the internecine feuds of the intelligentsia are harbingers of a return to earlier patterns (even if he never brings himself to tell us just which patterns he has in mind) in society at large. The days when *Gymnasium* graduates (*bildungs Bürgertum*) avidly followed the musings of the heirs to Germany's great literary and philosophical tradition are long gone. True, there are some who lament the fact that the youth no longer learn Greek and Latin and appear ignorant of the literary canon. But these voices are akin to those remnants of an earlier American epoch, people who today spend their evenings together over cocktails discussing the fact that even the "good clubs" are letting in Jews and Catholics.

The average German neither knows nor cares about the Walser affair. Indeed, if one were interested in future political or social trends in Germany, one would do better to follow the thinking of such figures as Ron Sommer of Deutsche Telekom or Jürgen Schremp of DaimlerChrysler. Not only do they have the ear of a Socialist chancellor, but they are also role models for the new generation of German youth who are thoroughly Americanized and profit-oriented.

All of this is not to say that post-unification Germany is without problems. There is widespread disillusionment in the population of the former East Germany and some potential for political instability. But the sources of this discontent are not found in the writings of former Leftists turned Rightists, nor are they likely to there be assuaged. □

Stefan Sullivan, Washington, D.C.:

BY claiming that German writers have "shamelessly misused the Nazi past", Jacob Heilbrunn unfortunately recycles many of the tired themes of the Holocaust Industry, that collection of observers who frame the German wartime experience as one of, and only of, complicity with Nazism and aggression toward the Jews. For example, in an otherwise sympathetic summary of Günter Grass' novel, *The Tin Drum*, Heilbrunn mocks the author's nostalgia for his native Danzig, his lapse into "sheer bathos" in describing the surrounding landscape, and

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his overall "elegy for German links to the East." Must every German expression of warmth toward his native landscape betray some dormant zeal for *Lebensraum*?

True, the Nazis transformed the traditional German love of nature into an anti-modernist utopia of agrarian kitsch. But this sentimentalism for landscape and *Heimat*, whether inspired by the grandeur of the Alps or the melancholy lyricism of the eastern plains, is genuine, deeply rooted in German culture, and far transcends the twelve-year Nazi legacy. If Germany is to organically reconnect to its past and not to some sterile, if harmless, concept of "constitutional patriotism", it must also reconnect to *this* past. Attempts by German writers to do so should be lauded, not subjected to facile derision.

Heilbrunn also takes issue with the writer Martin Walser's supposed attempt to "conflate the suffering of the German Jews with the calamities that ordinary Germans experienced during the war." But, in fact, Walser is doing just the opposite, making the basic—but to outside observers still hard to grasp—point that the ground-level German wartime experience had little to do with the Holocaust or the Jews. It was about food shortages, mind-numbing toil in armaments factories, and terrifying gossip about the Eastern front. Then, when the bombings began, civilian life descended into a surreal subterranea of darkened shelters and mounds of rubble, of digging for lost relatives and grieving for fallen sons, of simply surviving in a land of hallowed-eyed walking dead. No one would suggest that this mass destruction matches Nazi genocide, that Dresden, so to speak, counterbalances Auschwitz. But it is equally nonsensical to suggest something else entirely, that any honest attempt to convey a civilian experience independent of the Holocaust smacks of right-wing subterfuge.

Finally, Heilbrunn would have a difficult time believing Walser's memories of his wartime past—i.e., that people were largely unaware of Nazi crimes. But they ring quite true. I cannot speak for all Germans, but my mother, born during the war in a small Bavarian village, did not learn about the Holocaust until the mid-1950s, when the local bakery acquired a television. This may reflect the ignorance of the provincial, but to impute to this ignorance—one shared by many Germans of that generation—a deliberate and self-serving amnesia is quite wide of the mark. □

Heilbrunn replies:

JAN-WERNER Mueller's and James Davis' letters faithfully recapitulate Josef Joffe's overwrought attack against me in *Foreign Affairs* in 1997, entitled "Mr. Heilbrunn's Planet." Both Mueller and Davis revive Joffe's claim that no intellectual Right exists and that Germany is boring. But Joffe's response was wrong then—and, in light of recent developments, it is even more fanciful now.

Far from being a placid place, the Federal Republic is currently in an uproar. Battling resurgent anti-Semitic and anti-foreigner violence has become the number one German problem. Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder has proposed banning the National Democratic Party and, in the wake of the firebombing of a synagogue in Düsseldorf, pledged to use "all available means" to

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protect German Jews. Bundestag President Wolfgang Thierse recently declared, "At this time the greatest danger comes from the right and we have to confront it—now. Right-wing extremism has become a cultural phenomenon. . . . It exists not just in East Germany." Jewish community leader Paul Spiegel has assailed Martin Walser for legitimizing the Right, stating, "I think I simply couldn't imagine that fifty-five years after the Holocaust so much secret and open aggression could exist." Are Schroeder, Thierse and Spiegel displaying, to borrow James Davis' words, their "ignorance of the workings of contemporary German society"?

Unlike Davis, Mueller recognizes that intellectuals have played a key role in shaping the political culture of the Federal Republic. He quite rightly notes that figures such as Jürgen Habermas sought to promote a democratic Germany and were apprehensive that unification might result in a reversion to the bad old days. But that is not the entire story. Many others were very bad eggs, both anti-American and soft on East Germany. In his novels set in the 1950s, the novelist Wolfgang Koeppen, who I probably should have mentioned in my article, portrayed American GIs as occupying thugs. Günter Grass' solicitude for East Germany only increased after unification; his 1993 novel, *A Wide Field*, is a prolonged lamentation for Honecker & Co. And admiration for East Germany's accomplishments was scarcely confined to novelists: Theo Sommer, then publisher of *Die Zeit*, traveled across the Berlin Wall in 1986 to report that "in fact a social system has been developed over there which in many ways puts ours into the shadow."

In response to such political correctness, a vanguard of "extremists in pinstripes", as the German phrase has it, is now championing assertiveness and challenging the legacy of guilt and shame promoted and, it must be said, instrumentalized by the Left. Some of these nationalists, for example, Martin Walser, are shamelessly misusing the past; others are raising legitimate questions about a Bonn consensus culture that saw patriotism and a healthy German national identity as boo words. (Stefan Sullivan's letter shows how easily the attempts to construct a national identity can go awry. He seems to think that the Holocaust was an incidental part of the Second World War, when it was in fact the *raison d'être* of the Nazi state. Moreover, by drawing a distinction between the German and Jewish experience, he assumes that Jews were not German citizens.)

The latest spate of right-wing violence has set off a new round of fireworks. Now, it could be argued that Germany is too complacent in the face of these developments, or that it likes nothing better than to lash itself into an emotional frenzy. The one claim that seems untenable, however, is that Germany is quiescent. Yet this is what Mueller and, above all, Davis would apparently have us believe. Such tommyrot brings to mind Lord Palmerston's remark: "When I wish to be misinformed about a country I ask the man who has lived there thirty years." □

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Books

The Real Synthesis

John Lukacs

Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 938 pp., $40.

THIS IS a very large book, nearly one thousand pages, and not without some merits. But it is not really about the Third Reich, and it is not a New History.

There is the history of the Third Reich. There is the history of National Socialism. There is the history of Adolf Hitler. There is the history of the Second World War. They overlap, but they are not the same. Michael Burleigh's book is entitled *The Third Reich*, but, in an undisciplined way, its focus is directed to and its chapters deal with all four themes, moving from one to another and back again. However, this is not the main problem with the book. Its problem, besides its content, is its perspective. Burleigh is right in detailing the brutalities and many of the horrors of the Third Reich. Here and there he adds telling details generally unknown or even unmentioned by others. But he writes that, because of its stupidities, brutalities, fanaticism and prejudices, the Third Reich was destined to be destroyed. Unfortunately it was not.

By the Third Reich we should mean the great German state of 1933–45 that was a Germany different from its then recent past and of course from its future. Despite the inevitable presence and continuation of the same population and of many of its institutions, this was a new kind of state, with a drastically new flag, designed by Hitler himself, the flag of his party having become the flag of the Reich. Symbols do matter, and this was more than a symbol. There came a time when that swastika flag was hoisted and flown across Europe, from the Pyrénées to the Caucasus, and from the Aegean to the Arctic, carried by the armies of the Third Reich. For comparison, the French tricolor flew over a much smaller domain under Napoleon. The Second World War was a struggle of epic dimensions that the Third Reich almost won.

Even before the Second World War began, the Third Reich had become the greatest power in Europe, far surpassing the extent and the achievements of Bismarck's or William II's Second Reich. From a depressed republic without allies, with many millions of unemployed, there arose a new Reich within a few years,

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prosperous, arrogant and powerful, incorporating Austria and Czechoslovakia without having to fire a single shot, attracting powerful allies such as Mussolini's Italy and Imperial Japan, and surrounded by smaller states unwilling to challenge almost anything that the Third Reich desired.

By 1939 the Third Reich, in some ways, was the most *modern* country in Europe. Then came a war that its leader deliberately chose to bring about. Behind him his Third Reich produced armed forces and an organization that stunned the world. In 1940 the Third Reich came close to winning the Second World War. Had its leader not hesitated to invade England this may have happened. In 1941 it again came close to winning the war by knocking Russia out of it. Eventually the armies of the Reich were halted before Moscow; but, obeying their leader, in the ensuing winter they stood fast and deflected the fate that had befallen Napoleon's Grande Armée 130 years before. By that time the greatest powers of the world, with a combined population of at least four hundred million, were arrayed against the eighty-odd million of the Third Reich, having formed a coalition of British, Americans, Russians, Capitalists and Communists, which held together until the end. Even then, it took nearly four years before their overwhelming power was able to force the Third Reich to capitulate. The armies of the Reich did not surrender even after most of their homeland was conquered by the Allies. Some of them fought on for another ten days after their leader's death.

How was this possible? Burleigh's massive volume does not illuminate this awful story. Yes, a catastrophe it was, including the deaths of many millions, of even more innocent civilians than soldiers. Yes, the Third Reich was a brutal machine—but an awesomely efficient one, alas. Doomed to defeat it was not. And this had much to do with National Socialism. The Third Reich was a National Socialist Reich.

The National Socialist character of the Third Reich is something that Burleigh does not describe clearly and that he may not even understand sufficiently. The power, the attraction and the historical significance of National Socialism was a phenomenon of worldwide import. Besides a very long introduction, Burleigh devotes an unduly long chapter to the Weimar Republic, to how Hitler came to power; but the emergence of national socialism predated that. The classic categories of the political history of the nineteenth century were conservatives and liberals, their dialogue and debate (terms that are more and more outdated and yet employed even now). But, contrary to the Hegelian scheme, this Thesis-Antithesis did not lead to a Synthesis but to something else. After about 1870 two new forces appeared: nationalism and socialism. Their relationship, and their combination, rose above the conservative-liberal antithesis in almost every country of the world.[1]

Nationalist socialism has had different variants throughout the world. Its proper recognition has been confused by two imprecise terms that Burleigh uses throughout: Fascism and totalitarianism. Fascism was an Italian phenomenon in practice (and for a while in essence), different from German National Socialism. The Leftist usage of applying the adjective "Fascist" to any kind of dictatorship (or even non-dictatorship) of the so-called

[1]Including the United States, where—in European terms—it could be said that the difference between Republicans and Democrats was (and still is) that the former have been more nationalist than socialist; the latter more socialist than nationalist. (The same applies to the older categories of American Populists and American Progressives.)

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"Right" has been wrong (a misuse dictated by Stalin as early as 1932, since he wanted to deter the recognition that his own regime was turning in a *nationalist* "socialist" direction). What Hitler was able to do was to fuse nationalism and socialism into a particularly appealing and powerful ideology for Germans. This went farther and deeper than the imposition of party rule upon the state. Professors, lawyers, workers, generals, soldiers reacted to the ideology of National Socialism very positively indeed. Not every German was a National Socialist party member or believer; far from it. But that ideology was powerful enough to create new or reformed institutions and organizations, inspiriting the German armed forces that carried the swastika flag proudly across Europe and into the oceans of the world. It was because of National Socialism that the Third Reich fought until the very end. It had to be conquered in its entirety. To consider the National Socialist Third Reich as a crazed, reactionary episode, as so many—including Burleigh—do, is wrong. It was, alas, more than an episode. Even now, with Communism having lost whatever appeal it may once have had, there are National Socialist believers and sympathizers, not only in Germany and Austria but across the world—people who are open or hidden admirers of the Third Reich and of its record, and who see it as a once healthy alternative to both International Communism and to decadent International Capitalism. We must not underestimate their potential—especially if the West slides into the final and sorry chapter of its decline.

THE other term that Burleigh uses indiscriminately (he is not alone in this) is that of totalitarianism. That word, too, has a curious history. It was first used by Mussolini's Italy in the 1920s, in a stentorian-operatic, Italian version: what Mussolini meant was the total priority of the state over the individual (considering the Italian temperament, his particular problem). Hitler never cared much for the state: to him the National Socialist Reich was a Reich of the *Volk*. The state, as he said on occasion, was only an old-fashioned framework, cracking at its seams, a *Zwangsform*. (He also said that he was not a dictator: "every South American popinjay can be a dictator." He, instead, had a great people behind him—unfortunately so.) That stuttering polysyllabic word, "totalitarianism", became especially current in the United States after 1950, when some intellectuals (belatedly) were forced to recognize that Stalin's Soviet state was as much a police state as was the Third Reich (if not more so).

But a police state and totalitarianism are not the same things.[2] The best part of Burleigh's book is his long chapter, "The Demise of the Rule of Law", describing how easily and rapidly law and order were refashioned and corrupted in the Third Reich. Yet the awesome efficiency of the Third Reich and its awful brutalities were not always due to police rule: they were the outcomes of the popularity of its National Socialism. Besides, there was much more freedom—or, rather, elbow room—in the Third Reich than in Soviet Russia: as long as people (those who were not victims of the state's racial policies, that is) did not act or speak openly against its leader and its institutions they were, relatively, free. "Totalitarianism" is a very imprecise term: no state, not even Stalin's Russia, can be entirely total.

Burleigh regards the Third Reich as but one example of "totalitarianism", which is both imprecise and unhistorical. The Third Reich was *sui generis*. In more

[2]Czarist Russia, Batista's Cuba and the Shah's Persia were police states; but they were not totalitarian.

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than one way this book is about "totalitarianism", going well beyond the history of the Third Reich. This appears at its very beginning. On the second page of its long introduction, the second footnote (among the thousands of them) refers to a book about the 1999–2000 war in Chechnya. On page four there is a long (and well-known) quote from Tocqueville that has nothing to do with totalitarianism or with police rule (it was a prophetic description of majority rule and the coming welfare state). For an Englishman, Burleigh is curiously attracted to all kinds of unreliable and verbose philosophizers of the Hannah Arendt variety. There is a very long chapter on "Occupation and Collaboration in Occupied Europe 1939–1943" (why stop in 1943?), which, in the author's own words, is "a highly selective tour of occupied countries." Very well; but what has that to do with a history of the Third Reich? The political inclinations and the psychology of the various National Socialist collaborationists, from the Caucasus to the Atlantic, is an important but a different subject, and their activities could not even be subsumed by a work dealing with German police rule in the occupied countries, since there was more involved than that. The bibliography of Burleigh's book is also wanting.

The history of the Third Reich (and of German National Socialism) cannot be, of course, entirely separated from the history and character of Adolf Hitler. In this respect Burleigh's phraseology and his description are rhetorical at worst, and one-dimensional at best. Of Hitler he says that, in 1945, "A demented criminal converted himself into a martyred hero." This is way too simple. "Criminal" means defying the law. Hitler was worse, and more dangerous: like Genghis Khan or Ivan the Terrible, he *was* the law. "Demented"? He was a man who possessed many talents, well beyond his undoubted talent for demagoguery—talents that he consciously used for brutal and often evil purposes, which is exactly why he was responsible and should be regarded as such. Burleigh does not understand Hitler, which is one of the reasons his history is faulty. In the last pages of his book he misdates the day of Hitler's marriage, his dictation of his testament, and the day of his suicide. Perhaps such small details do not matter much. What matters, unfortunately, is that what Richard Sheridan said about a speech in the House of Commons more than 200 years ago is apposite to *The Third Reich: A New History*: "There is much in it that is both new and true, but unfortunately what is true is not new and what is new is not true." □

John Lukacs is author of *The Hitler of History* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1997) and *Five Days in London: May 1940* (Yale University Press, 1999).

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Holding the Bridge

Andrew W. Marshall

Robert G. Kaufman, *Henry M. Jackson: A Life in Politics* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 548 pp., $30.

IT WAS Reagan National Security Adviser Richard Allen who characterized Scoop Jackson by evoking the legend of Horatius, the Roman soldier who single-handedly held off an advancing army at the bridge to Rome. In his new biography of Jackson, Robert G. Kaufman goes a long way toward explaining why Allen would evoke such a figure. There are two related stories here: Jackson the successful politician, and Jackson the forceful proponent of containing the Soviet Union at a time when many, and especially his fellow Democrats, had given up the fight.

Kaufman has produced a fascinating and informative recounting, one that lauds Jackson as an outstanding hero of the Cold War. It is sympathetic yet even-handed in its portrayal of the political context within which Jackson lived.

As Kaufman rightly demonstrates, Scoop Jackson was exceptionally effective as a politician. The close attention he paid to the interests of his constituents enabled him to win elections by very large margins. When he reached the Senate, the relations he developed with his colleagues and his mentoring to more junior senators created natural allies for his causes. Jackson's character, sobriety, strong work ethic and willingness to cooperate with others proved to be key assets in forming legislative coalitions. He was successful in recruiting and retaining a staff of loyal, dedicated people. Thanks both to his own hard work and to that of his staff, Jackson was often the senator who had best thought through his positions, and who had the most searching questions to ask at hearings. As a result, others turned to him with confidence.

Because of his failed bids to capture his party's nomination for president in 1972 and 1976, Jackson felt that he was something of a failure politically. But by any standards he was among the most respected, effective and influential members of the Senate. Kaufman notes, "An apt analogy can be drawn comparing Jackson with John Calhoun, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, Robert La Follette, and Robert Taft—all dominant and controversial senators who were at once revered and reviled, never attained the presidency, but nonetheless had a decisive impact on history." The term "reviled" does not fit, however, as Scoop was an extraordinarily agreeable man.

Jackson's position and influence on foreign policy in the Senate, specifically his membership on the Armed Services Committee, make up the second part of the story: Jackson's role as a stalwart proponent of early Cold War strategy. He was convinced of the logic and rightness of the strategy laid out in NSC-68, which was put before President Truman in 1950 and reaffirmed and expanded in the first year of the Eisenhower administration. The goals, as stated in NSC-68, were to thwart the Soviet Union's grand political design of achieving dominance of the Eurasian land mass, and, ultimately, to "foster fundamental change in the nature of the Soviet system." As Kaufman says,

> Jackson agreed completely with NSC-68's conceptual framework of a long-term strug-

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gle between American freedom and Soviet totalitarianism, and with the expensive means that it called for to combat the Soviet threat: a vast military buildup in conventional and nuclear arms, the alternative to which was the enslavement of the free world.[1]

Jackson's unwavering support for this basic strategy made him a major proponent of a robust containment policy, especially in the 1970s. As others backed away from its goals, he kept the faith.

Jackson's support for the strategy of containment is the most interesting story of all. Kaufman's recounting shows that we are in some danger, as Paul Wolfowitz wrote recently in these pages, of forgetting just how divided and contentious informed opinion was on how to deal with the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, we do not yet have an adequate analytical history of the period from 1945 to 1991 that describes the alternative views of containment, the balancing of risks and ambitious goals, and the uncertainties with regard to the nature, strengths and weaknesses of the opponent. Such a history is needed to straighten out the facts and depict clearly the opposing viewpoints, especially as they emerged after the early 1960s. It would provide an overview of the changes in emphasis and direction of U.S. policy that took place during the whole of the Cold War.

While there may have been a general consensus on the continuation of the strategy of NSC-68 from the 1950s to the mid-1960s, at the end of this period there was a significant shift toward controlling the risks of active military competition with the Soviets, and a consequent emphasis on arms control. In the 1970s, some government officials had increasing doubts about America's ability to sustain competition in the longer term, and therefore advocated an emphasis on political accommodation. The Reagan administration favored something close to the initial containment strategy, a focus on vigorous competition with the Soviet Union—indeed, an emphasis on driving up the cost for the Soviets to stay in the game. All of this took place against a background of serious misassessments of the strengths and weaknesses of the Soviet Union. These include overstating the size of Soviet GNP, understating the percentage of it devoted to the military and other means of extending Soviet power, and underestimating the corruption and increasingly evident weaknesses within the Soviet Union.[2]

Indeed, most observers largely missed the growing pessimism of the Soviet elite from the mid-1970s onward. There were some people who had more accurate insight into the situation in the Soviet Union, but these were very few and on the whole were not listened to. It is not clear from Kaufman's book that Jackson himself knew how bad the Soviet situation was. Kaufman should have discussed this in greater detail, as Jackson probably did believe the Soviet Union was in real trouble. The Soviet émigrés who left during the 1970s, with whom Jackson likely spoke, were a key source of this insight, though what view he formed from them is not clear. Further, his staff tells of his concerns that the Soviets might overreact in desperation at some point. This led him to caution more than one president not "to prick the bear" with trivial anti-Soviet rhetoric or bravado.

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[1]According to NSC-68, up to 20 percent of U.S. GNP could be borne for military and other programs.

[2]For example, during the 1970s and 1980s, the Western consensus was that Soviet GNP was on the order of 55–60 percent of that of the United States. My guess is it never got above 35–40 percent. The percentage of Soviet GNP devoted to military and other national power goals was established at 15–20 percent, while my guess is that it was somewhere between 25 and 35 percent.

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What comes through most clearly in the book is Jackson's steadfastness, his feeling that there was no reason to change the basic containment strategy, that we were *morally and strategically obligated* to compete with Soviet totalitarianism. He was optimistic about American society and its ability to overcome any obstacle.

It is not that more accommodationist positions had no merit. Indeed, a more comprehensive history of the period would show that one of the consequences of détente was that a much wider group of Soviet elites visited the West, enabling them to see what it was really like—how rich it was, how effectively Western societies functioned, what the careers and status of their counterparts were, and, in particular, the personal and economic security they had. Through such contact with and discussion of the material conditions of the West, détente served to undermine the confidence and morale of the Soviet elite. Peter Reddaway described to me in the early 1980s several interviews with the son of a high-level Soviet official, who spoke of the conversations around his father's dinner table in Moscow. The content and tone showed great pessimism about the USSR's ability to compete with the West. Complaints were voiced that it did not have the material resources to compete effectively, and that the Russians were incapable of turning themselves into Germans or Swiss—effective, orderly workers. The officials complained about the unrealistic goals set by their superiors, and of the insecurity of their lives. They had very little personal wealth; *if they were discharged from their* positions, they and their families would be in very poor straits.

The point is that there is a more complex story to be told about the context of the period from the mid-1960s through 1980 and beyond. This fuller story would, I think, show Scoop Jackson in an even better light than that in which he emerges in the pages of Kaufman's biography. Through all the uncertainties about the Soviet situation, he held fast to his positions. Moreover, he sought information on what was really happening in the Soviet Union when others did not. Kaufman ends, rightly, with praise of the man:

> Jackson's liabilities[3] do not diminish his evident greatness. Although he was not right about everything, he was right about what the United States needed to do to defeat the unprecedented threat that totalitarianism posed to freedom in the twentieth century. He was politically courageous, willing to take unpopular positions. He was a paragon of rectitude and integrity both in his professional and in his private life. He personified, in short, what the Founding Fathers hoped a senator could be.

Indeed, Scoop Jackson was the best this nation had to offer. □

[3]Kaufman cites his distrust of markets, preference for government intervention in most areas, and a romantic attachment to China.

Andrew W. Marshall is a government official serving in the Department of Defense.

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Hyphenating Foreign Policy

James Schlesinger

Tony Smith, *Foreign Attachments: The Power of Ethnic Groups in the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 190 pp., $35.

FROM the days of the Founding Fathers, who were forced to contend with a good deal of regionalism, the search for national unity has been a perennial American goal. That aspiration was captured in the happy Latin phrase of Benjamin Franklin, *e pluribus unum*, inscribed upon our coinage. After the close of the Civil War, the focus of that quest began to shift toward ethnic divisions in the body politic. Indeed, concern about "ethnic politics" can be traced back a long way. In my office in Washington, there hangs a cover from a *Harper's Weekly* of 1877—with a set of Irish-American protesters, gathered under the banner of Saint Patrick, proclaiming, "we demand in the interest of the Irish people", and a similar group of (potbellied) German-American protesters, gathered under the banner of Saint Gambrinus,[1] proclaiming, "we demand in the interest of the German people." The message is direct: Uncle Sam says, "If you come simply as Americans, this is the place. But if you persist in your distinct nationality, you must call at the State Department, where all foreign affairs are considered."

With the explosion of immigration at the end of the century and the emergence in 1898 of the United States as a world power, the challenge presented by ethnic politics began to intensify.[2] At the time of the First World War, it led to considerable bitterness about "hyphenated-Americans."

Now, in the wake of the Cold War, the issue has once again grown more intense—a result of America's dominant position in the world, the loss of interest in foreign policy by the general public, and a new wave of much more diverse immigration. As well, and giving the whole issue a different complexion, the forces that have tended in the past to forge national unity have weakened seriously. At least up until the 1960s, the American consensus was to view askance such ethnic demands, if not to repudiate them outright, as the *Harper's Weekly* cartoon did. By contrast, in these more recent decades, not only have the centrifugal forces in the United States been strengthened, in what is a substantially new climate of opinion, but they have been legitimized in a way that goes well beyond the acceptance of cultural diversity. It includes an acceptance of the more extreme forms of ethnic politics, such as single-issue constituencies, which are in some quarters treated as having positive merit. Politicians are eager to exploit these tendencies, most notably for fund-raising. Indeed, some politicians even brag about their mastery of "ethnic politics."

IN *Foreign Attachments*, Tony Smith examines the changing roles and the power of ethnic groups in the making of American foreign policy. His is overall

[1]The legendary inventor of beer, by current standards in itself an ethnic slur. Gambrinus is sitting on a keg of beer, patting his ample tummy, a beer stein in his hand and a crown on his head.

[2]For a fuller development of the problem, see my "Fragmentation and Hubris: A Shaky Basis for American Leadership", *The National Interest* (Fall 1997).

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an excellent study and deserves to be read by anyone who has an interest either in foreign policy or in the workings of the American democracy. Along with a thorough review of the evidence, he provides a generally balanced and fair-minded treatment of the subject, proceeding in a calm and non-polemical manner. It is precisely because he has these considerable virtues that the evidence of an intellectual tension in his handling of the issue is interesting and significant.

Smith styles himself a "pluralist." He seeks to combine the American aspiration for maximum freedom with a deep concern regarding the progressive evaporation of the concept of national interest. While he regards this balance as representing the "moderate middle ground", he is really rather ambivalent about the position that he takes. He fears that ethnic groups will become extreme in their demands, with each one of them insisting that it should have priority in setting U.S. foreign policy with respect to its homeland. He also fears that the search for national unity will thus be abandoned. In brief, he recognizes the "dilemma" of granting maximum freedom to ethnic groups in this respect, while merely hoping that they will recognize a national interest that transcends their own. Though he speaks of the "contradictions of pluralist democracy", in the end he appears firmly on the side of pluralism and less interested in resolving these contradictions. Thus, while recognizing the horns of his dilemma, he shies away from grasping those horns.

Despite Smith's general even-handedness, his partiality breaks through from time to time. The notion of the melting pot turns out to be an "ideology", whereas pluralism is simply the working out of democracy. He is a little harsh in his treatment of Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt, who quite evidently did not share the current *Zeitgeist*—far harsher than he is of contemporary politicians who violate his norms regarding the appropriate limits to pluralism. He characterizes the behavior of the Irish, the Germans and the Scandinavians in the period from 1910 to 1930 as a "significant drag" on American foreign policy, when by his own lights these ethnic groups were behaving quite properly in expressing their convictions in this pluralist democracy. One finds more than a touch of fashionable academic liberalism. In our universities today, pluralism and multiculturalism, whether moderate or otherwise, have become dogma that can scarcely be challenged.[3]

Yet, in the larger society—and for those who take the shaping of U.S. foreign policy seriously—such a challenge is unavoidable. In the years before Pearl Harbor, Franklin Roosevelt, as Wilson before him, was prepared to ignore the wishes of large ethnic constituencies. More recently, the society has been willing to run roughshod over the concerns of some ethnic groups, as Serbian-Americans, Orthodox Christians, Greek-Americans, Arab-Americans and others might attest. Such groups can suddenly become unfashionable, lose most of their access to the media, and their protestations are barely heard. When this happens, it is truly remarkable how little attention is paid to their concerns, even in the academic institutions most dedicated to pluralism.

The case of Elian Gonzalez proves an interesting example of this phenome-

[3]Of course, academic dogma and academic fashion are subject to variation over time, sometimes rather sharp. According to the logic of prevailing academic fashion, the position of the German-American Bund prior to Pearl Harbor reflected appropriate ethnic sensibility—and the Bund was unjustifiably assailed by the government and others merely for its support of (Hitler's) Germany.

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non. For more than a generation, the Cuban-American community has been the dominant force in determining U.S. policy toward Cuba. Nonetheless, when demonstrations in Miami were compounded by threats of physical resistance to any government attempt to return Elian to Cuba, the public decided that things had gone too far and gave remarkable support to the Clinton administration when it seized Elian. The Cuban-American community lost not only Elian, but a good deal of its political clout, as well. The event underscored the limited political power of ethnic groups and the dangers of overreaching.

What this tells us is that, in order to achieve their goals, ethnic groups are obliged to work stealthily—without overplaying their hands and attracting too much notice from the larger society. Thus, the underlying problem is the inattention to foreign policy by the general public, which allows such stealthy shaping of our policies to take place. The end of the threat from the Soviet Union and the substantially diminished danger of major war have diverted the general public from issues of foreign policy. Concern only arises when there is a likelihood of American involvement that threatens serious casualties. The upshot is that diplomatic action can take place and financial assistance can be given or withdrawn, while attracting scarcely any public attention. It leaves the political system both free and likely to propitiate the best organized groups—especially when reinforced by the lure of ever needed campaign contributions.

The result is that foreign nations, far more likely to calculate in terms of national interest than we are, are perplexed by American foreign policies. They cannot judge what we will do or what we will say on the basis of the touchstone of national interest, permanent or transitory. They are thus obliged to judge our actions by the vagaries of an ever shifting constellation of domestic pressures. Even though they recognize that the United States, as a dominant power, is remarkably benign, inevitably they grow frustrated by attempting to predict what we will say or do. For a nation that aspires to international leadership, indeed one that styles itself the "indispensable nation", this tendency makes it hard for others over time to follow us, let alone understand us.

THUS, the United States is faced with a unique problem. Never before in history has a dominant power been a democracy so sensitive to the claims of multiple domestic pressure groups. To be the international leader, one must be able to give clear and timely signals, comprehensible to others. The clear danger in the present and emerging situation is that the United States, while aspiring to international leadership, will be so divided by its various ethnic and other loyalties that it provides a cacophony of confusing and rapidly changing signals. In the long run, that inevitably will undermine our position of leadership.

For the moment, we may be so powerful that other nations will have to accept American capriciousness. But that relative position will not last forever—especially if we are inattentive. Because of the complexities of our style of policymaking, we would be forfeiting our capacity to act with the strength that comes from national unity.

It strikes me as curious, at a minimum, that many of those who insist on a highly assertive foreign policy for the United States—whereby we instruct other nations how to act internationally (and indeed domestically)—are the very ones who are most acquiescent in the new game of ethnic politics. They fail to realize that, as we temporize with these tendencies, inevitably our influence will weaken.

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To be sure, this kind of sympathetic attentiveness to the concerns of different ethnic groups is less of a problem for those who are prepared to accept a less ambitious foreign policy. But at the moment, they are a clear minority, at least among elites. Devoting one's attention to the careful balancing of different ethnic constituencies may be an acceptable role for secondary powers, such as the late Austro-Hungarian Empire, but is clearly an inappropriate guidepost for those leading powers that have an interest in the stability of the international system as a whole. The irony is that those who have embraced the legitimacy of ethnic politics, which means the propitiation of different ethnic groups, are engaged in undermining the very foreign policy they wish the United States to pursue.

Unless one is all powerful, foreign policy for major powers is about the steady building of one's national position and the husbanding of political capital and strength. It is not about quixotic ventures launched in response to countless domestic constituencies. The present degree of American dominance is not normal and will not last forever. If we wish our present international role to continue, we must shape our domestic arrangements to support that role, rather than have our policies shaped by those incompatible domestic arrangements. For a great power, policy is about preserving and wisely expending one's strength, not about harmonizing domestic constituencies.

Vice President Gore, in what may have been a Freudian slip of the tongue, or a political calculation or a simple error, interpreted *e pluribus unum* as "from one, many", rather than "from many, one." Whatever its provenance, his comment reveals the growing barrier to the ideal of national unity, represented by recent manifestations of ethnic politics.

We owe Professor Smith a great debt of gratitude for laying out in considerable detail so much of the recent history of ethnic politics in the United States, and, in particular, for his careful recording of the extent and the methods of ethnic politics. He may, under the rubric of pluralism, have been too lenient in his critique of these activities. Perhaps he felt that laying out the extent and the methods so employed was all that could effectively be done at this time, and that a proper critique should be left to future works or to others. Perhaps this self-limitation was necessary to disarm his potential critics by paying lip service to the current gods of academia. In any event, we remain indebted to Tony Smith for his delineation of these problems in a volume that merits widespread and careful attention. □

James Schlesinger is chairman of the MITRE Corporation and counselor at CSIS. He has served as secretary of defense, secretary of energy and director of central intelligence.

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Subverting Cant

John O'Sullivan

Conor Cruise O'Brien, *Memoir: My Life and Themes* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2000), 460 pp., $30.

CLARISSA EDEN, the Prime Minister's wife, once complained during the 1956 crisis that the Suez Canal flowed through her drawing room in 10 Downing Street. Far more turbulent waterways—the Bann, the Liffey and the Shannon—coursed through the parlor and dining room of the distinguished Irish family into which Conor Cruise O'Brien was born in 1917. As the first chapters of his memoir reveal, the young Conor was very early made aware of the gulfs separating some Irishmen from others. These naturally included the antagonism between Catholic nationalists and Protestant Unionists. But the divisions within Catholic nationalism were perhaps at least as powerful and probably more bitter. Dr. O'Brien's family was divided in particular by two deep gulfs: that between constitutional nationalists and "physical force" republicans, and that between nationalists who welcomed Catholic social power and those who resisted it.

His maternal grandfather, David Sheehy, was a leading figure in the dominant Irish Parliamentary Party in the British House of Commons from 1885 until 1918. And both of his parents were firmly in the same camp of constitutional nationalists. During the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin, however, a deranged British officer murdered his uncle, Frank Sheehy-Skeffington, a pacifist with strong republican sympathies who had come to the aid of a Catholic youth returning from Mass. Thereafter, Frank's formidable widow, Hanna, became both a symbol and propagandist for Irish republicanism, touring the United States after 1916 and lecturing on "British Imperialism as I have known it."

As Dr. O'Brien dryly notes, this lecture probably did not include the contextual details that her father was sitting in the Imperial Parliament at the time and that her brother was legal adviser to the governor of St. Kitts in the West Indies. In the independent Ireland that emerged from the Troubles, however, the fact that the Irish had been "among the ruling peoples of the Empire" was conveniently forgotten. Constitutional nationalism was the first of many post-imperial losers. It was Hanna's republican side of the family that enjoyed social prestige and closeness to power, and the constitutional nationalists like the young Conor's parents who were out in the cold.

As if that were not enough, O'Brien's father was an agnostic who specified that his son be educated in non-Catholic schools—a stipulation that his Catholic mother faithfully carried out after her husband's early death. With the Irish Catholic Church busily reshaping society in its own stern image at the time, the young Conor found himself twice suspect in unsmiling Irish eyes—once as insufficiently nationalistic, the second time as dubiously Catholic. And since his Catholicism was indeed dubious and destined to become more so, it was all the more important to him to assert his nationalism. So at his school and at Trinity College (institutions both Protestant in their foundation and Unionist in their sympathies), he went in for such gestures of Irish patriotism as remaining firmly seated when "God Save the King" was played.

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There was scant relief from such ideological turmoil at home. The young Conor seems to have been more plagued by aunts than any man since Bertie Wooster. His devoutly Catholic Aunt Mary sought to save his soul, hinting that his mother might be prolonging her husband's stay in Purgatory by educating Conor in accordance with his wishes, and his devoutly republican Aunt Hanna sought to direct his political loyalties into republicanism. Both influenced his upbringing, Hanna especially, but there seems to be a rooted impulse in O'Brien to react against any strong influence and in particular against any strong *intellectual* influence. As a result, the adult Conor emerged from these family quarrels neither in thrall to his aunts' fiercely held views, nor neurotically torn between them and the more tolerant nationalism of his parents, but with an independent-minded political outlook that combined a clear commitment to modern political liberalism with an analytical curiosity about the interests and justifications that all parties, not excluding liberals, bring to any dispute.

The main aspect of this outlook consisted of a hostility to arbitrary power together with a suspicion that any excessive power is likely to degenerate into the arbitrary kind. (Surely not coincidentally, such hostility was the theme that animated Edmund Burke in Dr. O'Brien's thematic biography of the statesman.) But a regime that places chains on power needs to be defended where it exists or established where it is resisted. And that implies a willingness either to conciliate or crush its enemies and, for either purpose, an ability to understand them and the powers at their disposal. Thus a liberal regime should not disdain the help of authority, or of tradition, or of religious belief, or of prudence, or of any of the ideas and interests that are usually supposed to rest at the right end of the political spectrum. It will always respect such aids, since they may well be rooted ultimately in popular opinion, and it will sometimes seek to seize them from the hands of its opponents.

DE VALERA's Ireland—that is, Ireland from about 1937 to about 1960—was not exactly hospitable to this brand of politics. Politically the country was a fledgling democracy that took peaceful changes of government for granted remarkably soon after a revolution and civil war; socially it was a quietly repressive society because the political victors (and most of the vanquished) wanted an avowedly Catholic republic that would be distinguished from liberal bourgeois England; and economically it was a Celtic dormouse. If the central reality of Irish life was the overwhelming power of the Church, however, this could not be admitted since it would confirm the Unionist slur that Home Rule would be Rome rule. The effect was a kind of limited democracy in which very lively political disputes took place within boundaries silently marked out by the bishops. Even the most radical Irish politicians presented themselves as good Catholics and maneuvered for episcopal approval. As the novelist Honor Tracey said about a cosmopolitan, womanizing ex-revolutionary whose baubles included the Lenin Peace Prize, "Ireland is a country in which Sean MacBride goes to Mass."

This was a state of affairs that O'Brien was almost designed to subvert. He had emerged from Trinity as a kind of European literary intellectual on the James Joyce model, a Catholic at best *croyant* and certainly not *pratiquant*, who undoubtedly struck his colleagues as a very exotic bird indeed when he arrived in the Finance Department in 1942 and, shortly afterwards, in the Department of External Affairs. Yet his depiction of De Valera's Ireland (and of De Valera himself) is far kinder than would be given

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by almost any modern young Irish liberal. He sees it the way Orwell saw wartime Britain: as a family with the wrong members in control. Though the quiet repression had real victims—poor Protestants, Catholic orphans, unmarried mothers—many a blind eye was turned to sin and heterodoxy. Under the facade of Catholic decency, even the civil service had interstices in which dissidents and bohemians were given shelter. In the Europe of the forties and fifties, it was a haven of easy-going virtue.

Besides, as a rising young bureaucrat, O'Brien had to confine his resistance to Catholic power to private practical jokes and literary essays published under a pseudonym. And his nationalism, though liberalish, still conformed sufficiently to the authorized version to facilitate his running of such sallies of nationalist diplomacy as the Anti-Partition campaign in the United States and the establishment of an Irish news agency to replace reliance on Britain's Press Association. In these years, accordingly, he was present at the creation of two transformations in Irish foreign policy.

The first, which he merely observed as a junior official, took Ireland from its policy of official wartime neutralism, embarrassing after 1945, to one of broad support for a U.S.-led anti-communist West. This reflected Irish interests and its Catholic hostility to Soviet communism, but it was less effective than it might have been because the Irish government, while remaining outside NATO, insisted to the Americans that Britain was letting the West down by holding on to Northern Ireland.

The cracks in this policy were too gaping for mere diplomacy to conceal. Still, it succeeded domestically to the point where O'Brien, seeking entry into Ireland for Hungarian refugees in 1956, was told that they could not be admitted because they were from a communist country. He explained that the refugees were anti-communists. "I don't care what kind of communists they are", replied the official. "They're not coming in."

As a senior member of Ireland's delegation to the United Nations, Dr. O'Brien played a more influential role in the second transformation of Ireland's movement in the late fifties from its pro-Western position, which implied almost automatic support for American policy, to a more neutral stance coupled with marked sympathy for the Third World. And although he was obeying a political directive from Frank Aiken, the Irish foreign minister, he was also following his own inclinations: to win more influence for Ireland internationally by gaining friends among the newly independent post-colonial states, and—that theme again—to place some check on the overwhelming power of the United States both at the UN and internationally. As it turned out, O'Brien's connection of Irish nationalism to Third World internationalism was a prescient move later followed by many an Irish left-winger. It naturally won him admirers in the UN's "Afro-Asian bloc." It led to his transfer to the UN secretariat. And it made him internationally notorious when he was sent by the UN to represent its interests in the Congo crisis.

THE KATANGA story is grippingly told here. To simplify, O'Brien saw "independent" Katanga as a neocolonial fraud ruled by Belgian economic interests and local white settlers, and, interpreting an admittedly ambiguous UN resolution, initiated military action to end its secession from the Congo. This action only half succeeded, provoked opposition in the Security Council, was effectively disowned by the UN secretariat, and eventually led to O'Brien's retirement from UN diplomacy. In retrospect, as at the time, he fingers the British government as the villain of this piece on interesting and plausible

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grounds: because it was then hoping to foist its own white-ruled neocolonial fraud, namely, the Central African Federation, on Nyasaland and the two Rhodesias, it wanted neither contagious disorder nor the successful overthrow of white rule next door.

There is no reason to doubt the facts in this account. And in opposing the arbitrary rule of white Rhodesians, O'Brien is being perfectly consistent. But is he applying his other tests and estimating the forces ranged against black majority rule in Central Africa in 1960? The British government not only had to calculate the risks of violence spreading—a prudential duty for any government—but it also had to know that a quarter of a million whites controlling all the levers of power could only be dislodged either by a British military invasion or a prolonged guerrilla war. If London was not prepared to invade (and it was not), then it had to finesse the situation—which meant creating a new multiracial polity in which the black majority had limited democratic rights, in the hope that this would evolve over time into majority rule.

This attempt failed, in part perhaps because Katanga's secession was ended and O'Brien vindicated. But was it either unreasonable or dishonorable? After all, the consequences for Central Africa were exactly what London feared: a strong push for immediate black majority rule, the rise of the Rhodesian Front arguing for undiluted white supremacy, the Unilateral Declaration of Independence, fifteen years of sanctions and guerrilla war, an eventual settlement that rewarded the most extreme party, and a government that has impoverished the country and murdered large numbers of its citizens. The outcome might perhaps have been still worse if the British had succeeded in keeping Katanga afloat; but it is hard to imagine how.

Whatever the historical might-have-beens, O'Brien emerged from the Katanga crisis widely misunderstood as a Third World revolutionary and settled enemy of Western interests. This reputation increased throughout the rest of the sixties, when, as a professor at New York University, he was among the first demonstrators against U.S. policy in Vietnam and, later, was appointed chancellor of the University of Ghana by Kwame Nkrumah. In fact, the headlines were somewhat misleading. As he anti-heroically tells the story, O'Brien prudently retired from demonstrating when a New York cop kicked him hard on the shin for "going limp." And he disappointed the more extreme members of the Third World lobby by bravely defending the independence of the University of Ghana and academic freedom against both the insidious pressures of the president and the outright thuggery of his supporters. Nonetheless, O'Brien still enjoyed the reputation (and some of the reality) of an international socialist when he returned to Ireland to enter politics for the Irish Labour Party in the late sixties.

This made him some predictable enemies and some surprising friends. As O'Brien points out, Ireland was until recently the only nation in the world where an accusation of communism was the cover for a more serious charge—namely, being a bad Catholic. When the influence of religion is not avowed openly, its warnings have to be expressed politically, though not necessarily subtly. Thus, he tells the story of a priest who, giving a pre-election sermon, began with a brisk denunciation of communists and then went on to warn his parishioners about socialists. They were, he said, worse than communists; they were a breakaway sect of communists; you might almost say a Protestant variety of communists! O'Brien's political opponents, mainly in Ireland's natural governing party, Fianna Fail, were only too ready to exploit such themes against him.

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What is interesting is that the IRA and its supporters, then in a Marxisant phrase, found him *simpático* on the same grounds. Because O'Brien had enough nationalism left in him, and because Stormont then plausibly represented the arbitrary power that invariably arouses his opposition, he flirted briefly with a left-wing version of republican politics. The flirtation quickly collapsed when IRA sympathizers called on the Labour Party to demand the release of "political prisoners." Were they, he asked, to regard men who planted bombs in pubs as political prisoners? And with that question he began tearing away the veil of republican rationalizations for murder.

IN THE THIRTY or so years since then, Conor Cruise O'Brien has become the principal opponent of IRA terrorism in Irish politics—as a Labour Party spokesman, a minister in coalition governments, a journalist and an editor. As a writer of such works as *States of Ireland*—the single best explanation of what the Irish conflict is about—he has painstakingly demolished the official myths of the Irish state that continue to persuade young men to die for Ireland and, of course, to kill for Ireland, too. In playing these various roles, he has revised a major element of his own thought, moving from moderate constitutional nationalism to support for Unionism, on the democratic argument that this is what Northern Irish majorities repeatedly vote for.

Events, however, seem to have been moving in the other direction. He was gently chided in a recent *New York Times* review of his memoir for opposing the "peace process" on the above lines. Yet he can point out in reply, drawing on themes that thread through his life and thought, that insofar as the peace process succeeds, it does so by erecting an arbitrary power over the people—an administration that the voters cannot throw out in elections, since all parties with votes above a low threshold have an automatic right to ministerial posts. This arbitrary power is imposed by a political compromise with terrorism because democratic governments in London and Dublin fear that private armies will otherwise bomb their capitals. The political compromise with these armies allows them to retain their weaponry, while requiring that the British Army and the Royal Ulster Constabulary be partially disarmed and reduced in size and authority. And to keep the show on the road, the two governments have decided not to treat the maiming and murder of coreligionists as breaches of the ceasefire but, in the chilling jargon of Whitehall, as "internal housekeeping", thereby validating the rule of the gun in sectarian ghettos, Catholic as well as Protestant. If these arrangements have been extorted over democratic opposition by a few hundred terrorists armed with yesterday's weapons, it can only be because, *pace* Mr. Gladstone, the resources of civilization have finally been exhausted. It hardly seems a rational calculation of the real social interests at stake—or a solid basis for political progress.

In the South the picture is only a little better. Under the impact of economic growth and European liberalism, Catholic power has imploded with astonishing speed, to be replaced not by a liberal democratic humanism, however, but by the usual social ills of prosperity and—among intellectuals and much of the media—by terrorist chic and the romance of the gun. It is even speculated that Sinn Fein (whose members were interned by the De Valera government) might enter the next government if today's Fianna Fail needs its votes to attain a majority. O'Brien's nostalgic respect for "Dev" is readily explicable on political grounds as well as those of personal friendship.

If this autobiography is sometimes naturally *andante*, as all lives are, it is invariably told *allegro con brio*. There are won-

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derful jokes, witty asides, undiplomatic stories of the diplomatic life; there are also moving personal tales, inevitably neglected in a largely political review, of O'Brien's family life and his love for his wife, Máire, which flowered improbably against the exotically risky background of the Katanga crisis; and there are brilliant pen portraits of such ornaments of recent history as Sean MacBride and Dag Hammarskjöld.

And, finally, neither O'Brien's life nor the Troubles have come to an end. Even as I write, the peace process is creaking loudly. He may be writing—and making—Irish history for some years yet. □

John O'Sullivan is editor-in-chief of United Press International.

The Vanity of Reason

Kenneth Minogue

J.W. Burrow, *The Crisis of Reason: European Thought, 1848–1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 271 pp., $29.95.

John Dunn, *The Cunning of Unreason: Making Sense of Politics* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 401 pp., $30.

WESTERN civilization was founded on the idea that reason might save us from the passions and show us the way to a just society. The idea that man was a rational animal thus hovered between description and aspiration. Christianity brought great changes in the assumptions of classical rationalism, and in time a new kind of reason, that of instrumental rationality, came to dominate European thought. Philosophers such as Hobbes argued that even this thinner version of reason could generate a peaceful and commodious life. In Hegel, the old classical reason turned into the animating genius of history, leading to the famously ambivalent formula: the real is the rational. But more recently, reason has fallen on hard times. Two books with reason in their titles exhibit its self-destructive side and might help us to understand this fall.

In J.W. Burrow's *The Crisis of Reason: European Thought, 1848–1914*, a dense and brilliant account of the movement of ideas, the year 1848 features as a watershed in which discontent with the current condition of Europe fused with hopes that salvation was at hand. Contemporaries, he observes, "began to see themselves under the sign of continuous intellectual history." Less than a century later, reason, even truth, had fallen out of fashion. "Which reason? Whose truth?", demanded the dimmer kind of skeptic. Everything believed to be representational, bourgeois, true, pious, respectable, progressive or Western was under attack. The philosophers of suspicion—Marx, Nietzsche and Freud—had triumphed. Burrow deals with these men, but they are merely part of a wider panorama. Some scenes from this panorama will be familiar to the reader; others will be a revelation. The key figure in this development was, of course, Nietzsche, but (as Burrow clearly shows) it was the *Zeitgeist* what done it. Cognitive chaos is the way we live now, and as Burrow remarks at the end of his history, "Post-

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modernism in literature, for all the volubility expended on it, looks more like a gloss on Modernism than its historical grave digger. Modernism is our tradition." The allegiances of tradition did not immediately collapse. The necessities imposed by two world wars and the threat of communism kept many virtues in being. Only today do we harvest the full fruits of reason's collapse.

What Burrow brings clearly to light is a world in which reason escaped from the philosopher's cell to prowl the streets. Philosophy had always been regarded by the custodians of social cohesion as a dangerous occupation. In Islam it virtually had been strangled soon after birth, while in Europe up until the eighteenth century reason had been held in check by a censoring state and a church actively guarding its monopoly. But by the nineteenth century, cities, mass communication, the spread of education—one might even add "globalization"—had eroded these limits, and reason was let free to tear up tradition, convention, common sense and, eventually, itself.

Burrow, like any serious historian, stands loose to the general thesis expressed in his title, and the remarkable thing is that the most obvious way of treating this period is almost the opposite of that which he has chosen. It could have been characterized as "the crisis of religion" at the hands of reason. By 1914 the educated world had in large measure given up on religion. Universities were virtually faith free, and Christians entered them at peril to their belief. All had heard faith's long, withdrawing roar. Once one grasps this more conventional way of understanding the period, a significant aspect of Burrow's telling of it comes rather starkly into focus: most of his subjects seem to be trying to construct a rational substitute for religion.

Some thought they could find a substitute in a pantheistic materialism supposedly underwritten by physics, others in an evolutionary theory generated by biology and zoology. Communist salvationism emerged from Marx's brutal caricature of Hegel and the Scots. Sociologists looked for a new kind of human community free of the alienation and anomie of industrialized Europe, while political scientists thought they could detect a higher ethical substance in the state. Symbolism turned poetry into a kind of free-standing ritual—and so on.

TWO THINGS happened: first, reason as an active power of the mind had lost interest in coherence, and set to work tearing up anything construed as a foundation. Its essence was criticism, and criticism meant rejection. Second, reason had acquired a self-flattering posture as heroic and courageous by contrast with the timidities of conformity to convention. Its myth, one might say, was that of Prometheus, of the Titans seeking to storm heaven. Piety was cowardice. Vitalism, pantheism, teleology and heavenly communities were all affirmed and rejected. In Nietzsche, of course, this dynamic found an all around exemplar.

Science was the dominant model of explanation. Reason had played a part in its success, but not the kind of reason that enraptured the journalists and popularizers of this period. By the mid-nineteenth century, science was generating metaphysical, salvationist and ethical versions of itself. One such example is materialism—only for materialism to acquire a spiritual dimension that turned it into a form of pantheism. Again, Darwinism soon became adorned with social, racial and ethical encrustations flattering to the civilization that had created it.

Such was the respect for reason and science that many fell victim to the exhilarating belief that, after the blood-stained blunderings of human history, mankind was at last beginning to take conscious control of its own destiny. The intellectuals would bring peace and justice to

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mankind. This hope was especially cultivated in popular political ideologies such as socialism, nationalism and, above all, Marxism, whose prestige depended on the belief that it was a pronouncement of scientific reason. A rather peaceful and prosperous nineteenth century was half in love with the apocalyptic. Less millennial dreams envisaged the coming of brotherhood and community. The individualism of liberals such as Mill came to be formalized as the "character" of the later Victorians, only to dissolve into mere sensations and impulses of critics.

Burrow's story is likely to induce humility in any intellectual. Ideas that wowed the campus, even the world, for a generation ended up derided and forgotten. What Burrow remarks in a dry aside could be vastly extended: "It is hard not to feel that someone with the nervous system of Kaiser Wilhelm II should ideally never be allowed anywhere near a phrase like 'the struggle for existence.'" Philosophy and science are balanced with drama and the novel, but in a sense the presiding mode is popularization, a world of intellectuals rather than of educated professionals.

The climax of Burrow's story comes at the beginning of the twentieth century, by which point reason has destroyed virtually everything it has touched: reality, truth, nature, the state and the self had all been atomized. We are left with a motley of nervous Prometheans only half exhilarated by the terror of those infinite spaces of meaninglessness that had terrified Pascal.

How do we explain the tragedy of reason? Part of the answer would seem to be that the active power of reasoning got lost in the efflorescence of its own products. Marx, following Feuerbach, thought that man had become tyrannized by his alienated essence in the form of religion. It is not a bad formula to describe the consequences of this astonishing explosion of the rational intellect. Reason lost its architectonic role as sustaining the coherence of Western culture and found itself demoted to a mere department of human power in some wider story such as evolution, or technological determinism, or part of a conscious mind declared insignificant in comparison with the unconscious, or perhaps merely a parochial attribute of one among the many civilizations of the world. As reason swept away the cultural traditions of Europe, it gave birth to a small, nasty creature called will. This was not the rational will of more settled times, but the impulsive will of people nervously intoxicated with their own technological power. "What we cannot find, we shall make"; "Let's murder the moonlight", as the Futurists said in their attack on symbolism. The death of reason brings forth monsters, as Goya put it, and these were monsters that could imitate righteousness.

SUCH A collapse of reason could lead us to diagnose the cunning of unreason, which might be a possible formula for subsuming the horrors of twentieth-century ideology. Such a formula would, of course, parody Hegel's account of how the hidden rationality of history has generated modern civilization. John Dunn's *The Cunning of Unreason* merely puns the formula but is not concerned with its substance. His aim is to explore the character of politics. One's initial pleasure in finding a book of political theory that is not in thrall to the normative evaporates as one discovers that reading *The Cunning of Unreason* is like being trapped inside a rambling and interminable conversation at some Cambridge high table. Diffidence, irony, posturing succeed each other. Evidence and argument are largely missing.

What is "the cunning of unreason"? It is not easy to say, because Dunn's prose is the kind sometimes called "clotted"—all trees, no forest. A central candidate for unreason's cunning is Dunn's talk of "the gap between rich and poor." There was a

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time, he observes somewhat nostalgically, when "the modern republic . . . moved . . . away from the outcomes preferred by the rich to those preferred by the poor." Alas, that no longer seems to be the case. The abstract cause of this supposed unreason is our old friend, global capitalism. Its human form is Margaret Thatcher, the devil woman of the Oxbridge high tables. You get the flavor when Dunn raises the question, as an issue for democracy, of "why the Germans succumbed to Adolf Hitler in 1933, or the British succumbed to Margaret Thatcher in 1979." She promised economic dynamism, and, according to Dunn, she failed. He supplies no evidence for this remarkable judgment.

Dunn, like Burrow's subjects, identifies reason with an outcome: namely, an equal distribution of consumables in a modern society. This is a popular opinion among the elite, though not one that corresponds much to how anybody actually behaves. My own response is to wonder that anyone should dream of so boring a world of homogenized mediocrity. Apart from my taste, the fact is that the outcomes Dunn imagines the poor prefer could only result from the most ferocious despotism. It would be the ultimate servile state. It is no wonder, perhaps, that Dunn, in a moment of irritation with Thatcher, throws off the remark that he does not know what a "free society" is. This may just be posturing, yet it is actually entailed by his political program, presented here in the guise of an attempt to understand politics.

What is this thing called "the modern republic" that Dunn talks about? It is a curious transposition of the more normal term "state." It occurs, one may guess, because there is a current campus fashion to take "republicanism" as the *telos* of modern societies, a substitute for the painful loss of socialism, but it merely illustrates Dunn's insensitivity to realities. For the point about modern societies is that they have emerged from a millennium of monarchical rule, and whether they have monarchs or not, they have an essentially monarchical character. They are composed of individuals, for example, not of citizens. They are not subject to neurotic worries, as the classical republics were, that their virtue could no longer sustain their regime. Political correctness is perhaps a kind of pseudo-virtue that a republic might try to enforce, and perhaps Dunn would support such a dictatorship of virtue. In a remarkable note at the end of the book, he objects to metaphorical talk about "mastery" of the world because it employs "an obtrusively [sic] gendered language . . . an indolently [?] offensive residue of now mercifully challenged and increasingly discarded routines of gender subordination." All one can say is: "Wow!"

Reason in its formal guise as logic and grammar was long a powerful tool of Western rationality, a triumph of intellectual hygiene that saved us from the nonsense that imagination can conjure up. The crisis of reason came when it moved out of the philosophical business of clarifying rules and arguments and fancied itself the promoter of a superior way of life. Dunn's arguments for equality are one more way of life masquerading as the pronouncement of reason. Our modern problem is that reason has destroyed itself through its own vanity, and weakened Western civilization in the process. What we are left with is reason's husk: rationalism, the view that every dissatisfaction can be construed as a problem, and every problem can be solved by deliberate and (in politics) collective action. We keep imagining that the headless chicken aspect of modern politics might be cured by the next brain transplant. But the endless search for a cure is part of the disease. The point is not to change the world, just to understand it. □

Kenneth Minogue is professor emeritus of political science at the London School of Economics.

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Letters

Living With Russia:

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski is broadly correct in his bleak picture of Russia today ("Living With Russia", Fall 2000), but there is one aspect of his essay that is truly puzzling: where he advocates the Turkey of Kemal Atatürk and his successors as a model for Russia's future. For Russia to follow this path would be utterly disastrous for Russia's ethnic minorities, for Russian democracy, and for Russia's relations with other nations, both within and outside its borders. It is hard to see how someone of Dr. Brzezinski's historical breadth cannot understand this.

The Kemalist revolution had many virtues, and perhaps nothing else could have pulled Turkey from the disastrous situation in which it found itself after defeat in World War I; but at its very heart were a state ideology and program of rigid, monolingual ethnic nationalism dedicated to the forced assimilation of all minority languages and cultures. This was quite consciously intended to replace the relatively multi-ethnic, culturally pluralist Ottoman system. Groups that protested were ruthlessly suppressed or expelled. In the 1940s, the suppression or expulsion of the minorities was extended to the Jews, with whom the Ottoman sultans had had excellent relations. Nor did the abandonment of Ottoman imperial pretensions necessarily mean the abandonment of claims to protect by force Turkish ethnic minorities beyond Turkey's borders, as Cyprus clearly demonstrates.

The denial of minority rights continues to haunt the state's relations with its Kurdish minority to this day, and was largely responsible for the PKK rebellion. Moreover, while authoritarian one-party rule gave way over time to a form of democracy, the Turkish armed forces retain a supervisory role over the state and judiciary. They have repeatedly removed elected governments of which they disapproved, and used the police and judiciary to censor the media and punish dissent.

Russia has launched a savage campaign against armed rebels in Chechnya—and one very much on the Turkish model: no negotiations, no role for international bodies, ruthless war to complete victory. With its other ethnic minorities, however, the post-Soviet Russian state's relations have so far been tolerant. The larger minorities have their own autonomous republics, in which they can develop their own cultures. The Tatars recently symbolized this by abandoning the Cyrillic alphabet in favor of the Turkish-Latin one, and introducing this throughout their school system—a move that would be absolutely inconceivable in Turkey!

We must hope that this generally benign, very un-Turkish picture continues, for a Kemalist-style move by the Putin regime to suppress these national autonomies would be utterly wrong in itself, and would run a severe risk of bringing massive ethnic conflict to the heart of the Russian Federation, with disastrous consequences for all concerned. If this is in fact Dr. Brzezinski's hope, let him state it openly.

So Dr. Brzezinski's recommendations of a Turkish model for Russia are strange enough in themselves. But what is even stranger is that whenever Russia does in fact take even limited steps in the direction of Kemalist nationalist authoritarianism, supervised by the security forces, Dr. Brzezinski himself is the first to issue furious protests! Am I missing something, or is

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there a very serious moral and logical disconnect here? And if so, what is the reason for it?

ANATOL LIEVEN
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Brzezinski replies:

The EU is currently considering Turkey—not Russia—for membership in Europe. Perhaps it is Anatol Lieven who is missing something here.

Talking Turkey:

Norman Stone asserts correctly that the Cyprus problem is one of the obstacles standing in the way of Turkey's entry into the European Union ("Talking Turkey", Fall 2000). He then goes on to say, incorrectly, that Turkey has so many "strong cards" that "it is Europe, not Turkey, that will have to come to terms." As this assertion relates to Cyprus, Mr. Stone blithely proposes that "the simplest answer is surely just to have Turkish Cyprus recognized as a separate state."

It is ironic that Mr. Stone chose "Talking Turkey" as the theme of his article, since that expression means "speaking forthrightly." It is certainly not forthright or fair, either to Cypriots of both communities or to Turkey itself, to argue that the EU is not serious about or will not be able to insist on the conditions it has laid down for Turkish membership. Specifically, the EU has said that Turkey must take action to improve human rights, respect minority rights, resolve (as a legal matter) its territorial issues with Greece in the Aegean Sea, and resolve the Cyprus dispute on the basis of the relevant UN resolutions.

On the Cyprus issue, Mr. Stone chooses to focus most misleadingly on the intercommunal troubles of the mid-1960s as his justification for partitioning the island. He totally ignores the responsibility of the Turkish side for the conflict and the fact that, from 1968 until Turkey's invasion of 1974, UN-sponsored intercommunal talks took place and came close to reaching an agreement on mutually acceptable constitutional arrangements. Mr. Stone also ignores the fact that after 1974 the Greek Cypriot community made major concessions to the Turkish Cypriots by signing agreements (with Mr. Rauf Denktash, the Turkish Cypriot leader) in 1977 and 1979 to establish a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation.

For reasons known only to Mr. Denktash and his mentors in Ankara, he reneged on these agreements in 1983, when, in violation of international law, he attempted the secession of the area of the Republic of Cyprus under Turkish military occupation. Only Turkey (and not North Korea, as Mr. Stone erroneously writes) recognizes that regime and the UN has condemned the declaration of the purported secession as "legally invalid." Talks between the leaders of the two communities did, however, continue and progress was made in fleshing out the parameters of a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation through Security Council resolutions endorsed by the international community.

In 1997, however, Mr. Denktash broke off direct talks and demanded, as a condition for the resumption of talks, that Cyprus withdraw its application to join the EU and that the intercommunal negotiations be recast to, in effect, recognize the results of Turkey's aggression by discussing a possible "confederation" of "two states", in place of the previously agreed "federation" within one state.

There is no excuse for Mr. Denktash to continue to defy the international community and refuse to engage in direct negotiations for the reunification of Cyprus in a federal framework prescribed by the UN. I am confident that a majority of Turkish Cypriots, if allowed to express their views freely, would support the reunification of Cyprus. I am re-inforced in this view by the fact that tens of thousands of Turkish Cypriots have voted with their feet by fleeing the repression and deteriorating economic conditions in the occupied area. As a result of the illegal importation of Anatolian Turks, Turkish Cypriots are now, sadly, a minority in the occupied area, and are protesting their dissatisfaction with the status quo imposed by Turkey.

It is, indeed, time to talk turkey, but the proper audience is in Ankara, not Brussels. Friends should not deceive

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friends; so Mr. Stone would be doing his Turkish friends a huge favor by telling them forthrightly that the EU is serious about its conditions for membership, including its insistence to end the military occupation of 37 percent of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus. It is both dishonest and counterproductive to indulge the false notion that Europe will be forced to admit Turkey on Turkey's terms. The reality is that if Turkey wishes to join Europe, it will have to act European.

While Mr. Stone, a well-known apologist for Turkey, is entitled to his own opinion, he has no right manufacturing facts and distorting the history of our country. Regrettably, his article seems to have been published without serious editorial scrutiny and fact checking.

ERATO KOZAKOU-MARCOULLIS
Ambassador, Republic of Cyprus

◆

Norman Stone's "Talking Turkey" is written in his usual animated style. However, his approach to Greek-Turkish relations is problematic and probably irrelevant.

Professor Stone stresses that Greeks attacked Turks in 1897, 1920 and 1962, and lost, while only winning in 1912–13. Surprisingly absent from his scoreboard is the 1821 Greek war of independence that initiated the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. At any rate, his conclusion is that Greece "very deservedly" lost each time, and then complained that "Turks were very bad people." However, readers of this respected journal would have been better served if the author had actually used his knowledge to add that Greece confronted Turkey as an adversary belonging to the camp of the forces that fought against Britain, France and the United States (First World War), or with considerable Western help (war of independence).

It is also interesting that Professor Stone eloquently defends the Turkish positions on the Cyprus issue, but falls short of condemning the entire international community for ignoring his views, and for not having recognized the self-declared "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus." Almost amusingly, he is unable to explain the sole recognition by North Korea, though this ought to trigger alarm bells to all readers who might find Stone's assertions persuasive.

Furthermore, in his use of historical events, he tends to be very selective. He certainly knows that Turkey actually invaded Cyprus twice in 1974, and that it is virtually impossible for any disinterested observer to argue in favor of the second invasion. Also, Professor Stone ignores the persecutions and 1956 riots against the Greek population of Istanbul.

It thus seems that Norman Stone's approach to Greek-Turkish relations is not driven so much by scholarship, but perhaps by some private agenda. At any rate, the fact remains that many decision-makers in both countries are now concentrating on the future, and not on what happened one or two centuries ago. Common interests do exist, as well as opportunities for the resolution of bilateral disputes within a European framework, on the basis of international law.

Professor Stone's selective approach is becoming increasingly irrelevant to the future of Greek-Turkish relations.

ARISTOTLE TZIAMPIRIS
University of Athens

◆

Norman Stone's article on Turkey was a strange piece to see in *The National Interest*. As a former highly regarded Oxford history don now resident in Turkey, Professor Stone is well placed to write an intelligent defense of the thesis that Turkey has not received proper treatment from the West. It is thus depressing to see him put his name to a piece of unsophisticated propaganda that bears all the hallmarks of having been written by the Turkish foreign ministry. With a fifty-two page entry in the 1999 State Department's annual review of human rights and serious EU concerns about whether Turkey's current government structures are really compatible with EU accession, it is just not credible to dismiss all criticisms of Turkey as the work of Scandinavian busybodies.

Whether or not there is a sound historical reason for the intrusive role of the military in Turkish governance, the con-

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tinuation of this feature in modern Turkey is manifestly anomalous. Just as it was a precondition of progress in Latin America to get the military out of the cabinet room and back into the barracks, the same is true in Turkey. Turkey's friends should be arguing strongly in favor of civilianization, rather than trying, as Professor Stone does, to make excuses for military meddling. In his review of Andrew Mango's biography of Kemal Atatürk, Graham Fuller does not make this mistake. As a result, his piece contains a much more intelligent reading of modern Turkey.

JONATHAN CLARKE
Washington, DC

◆

Upon reading Norman Stone's "Talking Turkey", one cannot help but feel some sympathy for those Turkish people who are in favor of their country's inclusion into Europe; their cause could have found no more inept a representative. Using language and examples reminiscent of what is worst in the British historical tradition, Mr. Stone attempts to paint a picture of today's Turkey that ends up doing its European cause more harm than good. Thus, inflation becomes an occasion for anecdotal evidence into "the extraordinary honesty of Turkish people." Reservations regarding Turkey's religious incompatibility with the European Union are done away with by means of the extraordinary assertion that "[t]his is pretty well nonsense, not least because there are more practicing Muslims than Christians . . . in many European countries today"! According to Mr. Stone, further evidence for Turkey's European character is to be found in the fact that the sultan corresponded with the Pope and had his portrait painted by Bellini; one shudders to think of the implications of this line of reasoning for the fact that the President of the United States corresponds and even converses on the telephone with the president of China (and may even possess some Chinese artifacts). Those wishing to account for Turkey's exports in the past must seek Mr. Stone's "energetic" acquaintance, who with her lorry loads of hazelnuts "contributed a considerable share of them." As if all this were not enough, Mr. Stone uses quotation marks around the word minority to describe the Turks in Cyprus, as well as around the word invasion to describe what Turkey "had a perfect right to do."

The strategic importance of Turkey does not diminish the many real problems that are related to its becoming a European and First World country. "Fair elections" are meaningless when parties are eliminated, candidates are thrown in jail, and journalists disappear. Turkey has clearly come a long way, but it is time for Mr. Stone to come to terms with the fact that further progress cannot rely on paternalistic propaganda.

CHARLES D. SINGER
Cambridge, MA

You might as well cancel my subscription to your magazine based on the outrageously one-sided, jingoistic propaganda that Norman Stone's article expressed.

Denktash couldn't fill more garbage per page than Mr. Stone. I wouldn't know where to begin. Tragic with a name like *The National Interest* that you include such nonsense. Please cancel any future deliveries, I will stick with *Foreign Affairs*.

WILLIAM LEMBESIS
New York, NY

◆

Norman Stone's article was an unusually honest work, which surprised us Turks very much. After all, we are kind of used to reading and watching all kinds of biased works of journalism. My sincere gratitude. Thank you very much.

UNAL BASUSTA
Los Angeles, CA

Stone replies:

When you write or speak about Turkey, you have to get used to the Greek chorus that follows, and one of its most infuriating habits is to impugn the motives of the writer. In this case, I have "some private agenda" (Tziampiris) or my piece was written by "the Turkish foreign ministry" (Clarke). I have had this sort of thing before, in the London *Spectator*, and it is maddening. Yes, for the past five years I have taught at a (private) Turkish university, but the only proper conclusion to draw therefrom is that I might know something about

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what I am talking about. It is a country with a fascinating past and present.

Our Greek chorus seems to have great difficulty with the notion of independent academic inquiry. In 1920-21, when Arnold Toynbee wrote frankly about the atrocities committed by the Greeks in Anatolia, he was sacked from his Hellenic chair at London; when his successor, Richard Clogg, recently wrote an account of the affair, he was eased out of the same chair.

As regards the chorus' present offerings, Mr. Tziampiris' letter is not worth bothering with. The decisive event in the Greek war of independence was the intervention of the British, the French and the Russians. Mr. Clarke goes in for lofty attitudinizing, ticking off the Turkish army for being too powerful and for banning political parties. Why should a secular, parliamentary state not defend itself by banning parties that advocate its overthrow? The world would have been in a better state had the Weimar Republic acted thus against the Nazis. As to the Turkish army, it has considerable powers in large part because there was a terrorist war going on against the PKK—a terrorist war that, as we now know from the confessions of the captured leader of the PKK, was substantially fueled by Greek government ministers, three of whom were forced to resign when the truth came out. The exact equivalent would have been for the Turks to run training camps for Macedonian terrorists operating against Greece, claiming to be an oppressed minority.

Mr. Singer goes in for more tickings off and general loftiness about the "British historical tradition" (whatever that is supposed to be). His letter is again hardly worth bothering with. The European aspect of Turkey has been very well documented in historical literature. The latest thing to come my way is Dmitri Kitzikis' *L'Empire Ottoman* (1983), which shows how the early Ottoman Empire was a synthesis of Turk and Greek. Anyone, but anyone, who has done elementary work in the subject knows this. Quite what the balance was between Byzantine, Turkish and Islamic elements is a matter for interesting debate (and the scholarship involved is very demanding), but there is really no point in my bothering to instruct Mr. Singer until he has at least flipped through an encyclopedia.

Turning now to the Greek Cypriot ambassador's remarks, it is characteristic that he talks of "the intercommunal troubles of the mid-1960s." What he means is that the Turks were being murdered and driven into enclaves—a process very well documented by foreign journalists, who were revolted not least by the lying that accompanied it all. The latest book on this is Harry Scott Gibbons' *Genocide Files* (1997). It is based on Greek Cypriot documents, captured by the Turks, that show how the nationalists were planning the ethnic cleansing of the island. Crete had been similarly "cleansed", with ferocious massacres, two generations before. The ambassador makes great play of his alleged support from "the international community." In fact, the United Nations resolutions to which he refers date back to a very ugly time. The UN condemned the Israeli commandos who rescued the hijack victims from Idi Amin's Uganda because they had violated Ugandan air space. It imposed an embargo on northern Cyprus, which has had the inevitable effect of making the north much poorer, as the ambassador says, than the south (though I do not see any "repression", as he claims). But it has survived, and would prosper if anyone let it.

I wish the Greek Cypriots would understand this background; without this, they sound rather like unreconstructed Sudeten Germans, complaining about their expulsion from Czechoslovakia in 1945. Much to its credit, West Germany did not make its foreign policy dependent upon ancient grievances; around 1970, twenty-five years on, it launched *Ostpolitik*, and recognized the *de facto* borders. Peace then broke out, to everyone's benefit.

The Gap:

In "Why the Gap Matters" (Fall 2000), Eliot

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Cohen rightly identifies the causes and the import of the gap in civil-military relations, and offers some important suggestions for closing the gap. But Cohen focuses so exclusively on the effects of the gap on soldiers that he discusses the effects on statesmen only cursorily. Given that, as Cohen admits, civilian control of the U.S. military is not really in doubt, it is the policymakers' lack of interest in military affairs that is disturbing.

The rise of the American empire and the decline of the mass army pose, if anything, even greater challenges for U.S. civilian leaders than for the armed services. Yet the growth of American power has been accompanied by a curious complacency and growing ignorance of military affairs and war on the part of politicians and policymakers. This trend has accelerated since the end of the Cold War, with the result that the leading practitioners of international politics now more often regard their trade as a matter of economics, law or morality than as a struggle for power that is largely shaped by military balances and strategy.

Thus, for example, while Cohen is correct that reluctance on the part of the military played a large role in the hesitancy of the United States in Yugoslavia, an equal if not greater role should be reserved for those civilian leaders, both in the Clinton administration and out, who contended that Operation "Allied Force" was not a war, but merely a "humanitarian operation" like disaster relief. This illusion continues to root ever deeper into the American mind; for example, President Clinton recently transferred more than $1 billion in military hardware and aid to Colombia, not for the purpose of supporting the Colombian government's armed struggle against insurgents, but, rather, he said, to fight America's "drug war."

Today's civilian leaders have not merely "given up on . . . hard questioning and probing" that characterized our best presidents. They have lost the deeper understanding that war and issues of war remain the underlying determinants of international political power. There is an even greater gap in sensibility between Eisenhower or Roosevelt and Clinton—let alone Lincoln and Clinton—than between the President and any of his uniformed military advisers.

TOM DONNELLY
Project for the New
American Century

◆

The "gap" between the military and civilians has generated much ink in the past decade. Peter Feaver, Richard Kohn and their collaborators are to be congratulated for trying to move beyond polemics by collecting data ("The Gap: Soldiers, Civilians and their Mutual Misunderstanding, Fall 2000). Their survey demonstrates that the "gap" is actually many different gaps—among civilians as well as between civilians and the military. On the causes and consequences of these, however, the data raises as many questions as it settles.

As Feaver, Kohn and Eliot Cohen all admit, gaps have come and gone in American civil-military relations for centuries. It may be that the ebb and flow of gaps in times past tell us more about why they look wider now and how they will likely narrow than the recent data does. Gaps between civilians and the military in American history always accompany gaps among civilians. The U.S. military resists change when there is ambivalence within the civilian leadership or the polity at large about the wisdom of transformation.

The past decade is no exception. Take the military's reluctance in non-traditional missions as an example. While the military has frequently been employed in non-traditional missions, there has been little effort to debate the theory by which such missions are indeed crucial to the nation's security. Many in Congress have been vociferous in their disapproval of these missions and public opinion is mixed.

Civil-military relations inevitably reflect the political system of which they are a part. The gaps between civilians and the military mirror uncertainty among the American polity about how we should use the military to bolster American security in this new era. They will persist until politicians forge some agreement around a new theory of

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American security and how military forces fit within it. Recommendations for public debate on America's strategic role in the world, then, will do more to narrow the gaps than targeted civilian education programs or elite discussions on military professionalism.

DEBORAH AVANT
George Washington University

Feaver and Kohn reply:

Professor Avant's thoughtful letter underestimates many other sources of the gap between the military and civilians besides divisions among the civilian leadership: the differences in culture and perspective, historical events and forces that have driven the two apart, and more recent sources of conflict such as gender/sexual orientation, intervention abroad, and, of course, the special circumstances of the Clinton presidency. Since the beginning of the Republic, American officers have been forced to deal with conflicting masters (the president and Congress), as well as disagreements inside the executive branch. She is correct that sharp disputes between the two civilian branches can hamper civil-military cooperation. But given the other trends we have identified, the challenges to civil-military cooperation and military effectiveness would not disappear even if some utterly unprecedented consensus on foreign and defense policy were to sweep the country. Moreover, her analysis conflates one potential cause of the gap with its overall significance. Explaining one cause of the problem does not negate the significance of the problem.

Zionism:

In his review of Yoram Hazony's *The Jewish State: The Struggle for Israel's Soul* ("The Stiletto Idealist", Fall 2000), Adam Garfinkle faults the author for exaggerating the domestic influence of the so-called "post-Zionists", a group of left-wing academics and intellectuals whose call for the dismantling of Israel's Jewish identity is tantamount to collective national suicide.

This point is well taken. For one thing, when asked for their opinion, almost all Israelis unhesitatingly support the continued existence of the Jewish state, refusing to remotely entertain its possible demise. For another, many of those considered by Hazony to be "post-Zionist" do not subscribe to this gospel, notably the group of revisionist historians calling themselves the "new historians", who, while making a career out of Israel-bashing, are by and large avowed Zionists committed to Israel's continued existence.

This is not to deny that, at a time when it ostensibly appears stronger and more secure than ever, Israel is indeed facing one of the most serious crises of its half-century existence. This crisis, however, has little to do with either the Zionist-post-Zionist "struggle for the soul of Israel", or the quest for "a new synthesis of Jewish civilization that can reconcile the tensions between the universal and the particular", as suggested by Garfinkle. Fatigued by decades of fighting, and yearning for normalcy that would allow them to enjoy their recently won affluence, many Israelis have become both self-absorbed and demoralized in the face of the formidable obstacles that their country faces, to an extent that casts heavy doubt over Israel's future.

EFRAIM KARSH
University of London

Kosovo:

Andrew Bacevich's review of our book, *Winning Ugly: NATO's War to Save Kosovo* ("Banal and Dubious", Fall 2000), requires a brief reply. Bacevich's argument is inconsistent. He calls our book "thoroughly researched, well organized, timely, judicious." With these laudatory words, Bacevich seems to agree with most of our other and generally complimentary reviewers. But he also describes the book as "banal" or just "bad." We are confused.

Bacevich's harsh words do not stop with that; elsewhere, he describes our narrative as "utterly unoriginal" and "a couple hundred pages too long." The latter point is a bizarre charge to level at a book with only 226 pages of text. As for the former charge, history books are not fiction; they are meant to describe things that did happen, and

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that happened in a certain way. We were worried more about being right, and thorough, than about being original.

Bacevich calls many of our arguments about how to threaten and use force obvious, but they were hardly obvious to NATO policymakers through 1998 and early 1999. The two of us were critics of NATO policy toward Kosovo then, before most others. Moreover, he seems to have missed many of our lessons. He claims we ignore the potential need for humanitarian intervention outside of Europe, but most of our lessons focused on precisely that issue. Here, as elsewhere, he should read more carefully before putting pen to paper.

IVO DAALDER AND
MICHAEL O'HANLON
The Brookings Institution

Oakeshott:

Neil McInnes' thoughtful essay about Michael Oakeshott ("A Skeptical Conservative", Fall 2000) mentions that Oakeshott had his detractors, but omits any mention of perhaps his most scathing critic, the late anthropologist, sociologist, philosopher and LSE colleague of Oakeshott's, Ernest Gellner. Oakeshott seems to have ranked second only to Wittgenstein in Gellner's pantheon of the most misguided philosophers of the twentieth century.

Gellner's critiques were usually cogent and never dull, so it is interesting to recall his criticisms of Oakeshott's view of intellectual life. In his 1974 book, *Legitimation of Belief*, Gellner suggested that Oakeshott's doctrine

> appears to teach that there is an automatic cultural pilot called 'tradition,' who communicates with old-established members of the tradition by a private line of 'intimations,' and whose counsels are much superior to those of merely book-trained navigators who lack or fail to use that private line.

Later, in an essay included in a festschrift entitled *The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner*, Gellner wrote that Oakeshott adhered to a "curiously mystical and hierarchical theory of knowledge, within which what is worth saying cannot be said and what can be said is hardly worth knowing."

Oakeshott's theory of knowledge, Gellner said, postulated four forms of knowledge:

> 'practical' (good, very good, in possession of ruling classes habituated to handling power), but imbibed through prolonged membership and participation only, and not really articulable; 'technical' knowledge, communicable but (therefore?) inferior, for servants really; philosophical, also good but destined to remain separate from practice, any attempt to implement it constituting a kind of pollution, and betraying the unworthiness of him who attempts it; and ideology, invented by insecure *arrivistes* in the vain hope of compensating for their lack of membership.

As for Oakeshott's views about the extent to which one can theorize about a practice, Gellner claimed that under "Oakeshott's own brazenly and explicitly formulated principles, theorizing should be restricted to those immersed . . . in the practice in question." Paraphrasing Oakeshott, Gellner said Oakeshott wrote that "3 generations' participatory residence is the minimum entry qualification" into the fraternity of theorists.

Gellner also said that for Oakeshott, "[t]he entire point of 'political education' . . . is to teach us not to try, and to snub those who do." "It is astonishing", Gellner said, "that so simple a lesson should require a three-year honours course for its transmission." Gellner, by the way, was careful to say that while he disagreed with the intellectual pluralism of thinkers like Oakeshott, he did embrace political pluralism, at least so far as it holds that "freedom and social health are best ensured by dispersing power."

McInnes' essay alludes (in a more gentle way) to several of his own misgivings about Oakeshott, one or two of which appear to be similar in substance to Gellner's criticisms. □

STEFAN HERPEL
Royal Oak, MI

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Jumping to Confusions

Adam Garfinkle

IT IS A RARE moment for those who contemplate international politics when a dramatic event suddenly clarifies seemingly insoluble arguments over basic principles and policies. Such moments are of two basic types: those that repudiate a course of action and those that confirm it.

When a seminal event confounds a reigning consensus, it can condense fragmented thoughts on the margins of debate into powerful new metaphors and motivations, and generate a new vocabulary to discuss new realities. Thus Hitler's perfidy in Czechoslovakia not only turned the 1938 Munich agreement into a powerful symbolic repudiation of appeasement, but revealed unmistakably the strategic intentions of the Nazi regime.

When an event reaffirms widely held convictions, on the other hand, even strong dissent may be silenced by the trumpets of official vindication. Confirmation can lead to the commitment of more resources to achieve a more complete success, and to "lessons learned" applied to seemingly analogous problems. Thus the 1948 Berlin blockade solidified U.S. elite consensus around a Cold War model of American foreign policy, and the June 1950 invasion of South Korea spread that consensus to the country at large. Both resources and lessons followed.

What a lucky bunch are we, then, to have recently witnessed two such clarifying dramas in near simultaneity. The fall of Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade not only vindicates Clinton administration policy in the Balkans, but shows the broader wisdom of worldwide U.S. engagement in armed humanitarian interventions. The collapse of the Oslo process is a prooftext written in rocks, flaming bottles and rubber bullets that Oslo was a mistake from the start, not just by Israel, which negotiated and signed it, but by the United States, which endorsed and supported it at times with greater energy than the Israeli government of the day. And how useful for pedagogy that one event vindicates and the other condemns a policy of the selfsame U.S. administration.

There is only one problem with all this: it isn't true. Those who have jumped to such conclusions are mainly those who have been waiting impatiently at the chalk line for evidence to confirm their own views. The temptation to see "clearer than the truth", to twist Acheson's memorable phrase just a bit, owes as much to ego maintenance as to the wish to influence others. It is a natural impulse, and nearly all of us succumb to it now and again. But sometimes it leads us to jump not to conclusions but to confusions.

Adam Garfinkle is a former executive editor of *The National Interest*.

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"THE TRIUMPH of democracy in Serbia last week may well rank as the most important international event of the post-Cold War era", Robert Kagan and William Kristol told us on October 8. It constitutes for the United States "a strategic triumph of the first order", for it is now "irrefutable that U.S. intervention in Kosovo, as well as our earlier intervention in Bosnia and the continued presence of U.S. peacekeeping forces were essential factors in the defeat of Milosevic."[1]

If the Belgrade revolution is really such an epochal event, then it follows that U.S. interventions in the Balkans were epochal, too. But as the premise strains credulity, the conclusion suffers in consequence.

It is aesthetically pleasing that Slobodan Milosevic is fallen, but it is still far from clear that the problem he represented ever threatened any significant U.S. strategic interest. The Balkans are not, and never were, at the heart of Europe; anyone who thinks otherwise either cannot read history or a map. The worry that Balkan wars would spread to Central Europe or the Aegean was always exaggerated, and the argument that NATO would have collapsed had it remained passive before Serbian depredations became true only after Western leaders foolishly spoke and acted in ways that made it so.

Most likely, if the United States had let the Serbian dog lie it would be lying still—an ugly, decrepit and slightly rabid dog, true, but not an especially dangerous one for those able to keep their distance. Consider: as the wars of Yugoslav succession slithered on, the Serbian state was shrinking, not expanding, and its ability to jeopardize peace outside of the former Yugoslavia was shrinking with it. It had no ideology that appealed to others. Weapons of mass destruction were never involved. Serbia did not directly menace any American ally. And—contrary to common misuse of the word—there was no genocide in the Balkans, but a very brutal pre-twentieth century-style land grab not unlike many others in this and other parts of the world.

Neither was Milosevic the worst of the Yugoslav lot. He did win fair, democratic election at least once, which makes the claim that his fall has somehow introduced democracy to Serbia a little peculiar. Is a foreign country a democracy only when America approves of those elected? Or when it intervenes massively in the election campaign?

Aside from the exaggeration of the Serbian threat, there is the matter of what U.S. interventions have accomplished and are likely to accomplish in future. Yes, Milosevic is gone from power—though not yet from Serbian politics—and good riddance. But that will make building a viable, multi-ethnic Bosnian state only marginally easier, and it is *very* hard. It will not make removing Kosovo from its diplomatic suspended animation any simpler either. To the contrary, since it will be harder to deny Yugoslav sovereignty there with a "nice guy" like Vojislav Kostunica in office, NATO forces are liable to become "bad guys" in the eyes of the Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). The KLA being what it is, those forces are also liable to draw not only enmity but live fire. That the KLA has lost recent local elections to more moderate forces makes this not less but more likely.

As for Serbia proper, it may finally be able to "join Europe", but this is not obvious either. Having practiced for centuries a cult of sacred victimization, it will take at least a generation to convince the Serbian body politic that the whole world is not conspiring against it. It may take nearly as long to persuade many Serbs that atrocities were committed in their

[1]Kagan and Kristol, *Washington Post*, October 8, 2000.

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name. That is why it is a mistake to analogize Milosevic to Saddam Hussein. In Iraq, a homicidal madman aided by a small group of thugs intimidates and terrorizes a mostly innocent people. This is not the case in Serbia, where Milosevic has been much less ruthless and far more popular, and where his strongest opposition has come from the ultra-nationalist Right.

Which raises several potential problems. Dr. Kostunica may or may not be able to root out the corruption in Serbia's political and economic system and establish the rule of law. He may or may not turn out to be a skillful politician, and, if not, someone worse than Milosevic might replace him. It is sweet when a dictator is deposed, but the aftermath can quickly turn sour. Suharto was corrupt and aged and had to go; but is Indonesia more stable without him? The Haitian colonels were vile, but was Father Aristide such a prize? Will we still thrill to Milosevic's fall if former Deputy Prime Minister Vojislav Seselj, a certifiable apprentice mass murderer, succeeds Vojislav Kostunica? Stranger things have happened.

Against these achievements, too, we must mark the price paid for them. A sizeable chunk of the U.S. Army has been tied down by the Clinton administration's Balkan interventions. The damage done by heightened operational tempos to military morale, recruiting and retention is not mere, and neither is the large sum of money spent that might have been better used for modernization. The Kosovo war also damaged U.S. relations with both Russia and China and, conducted as it was without UN Security Council sanction, increased worldwide resentment of U.S. arrogance and double standards.

The most serious price in the long run, however, may be fallout from the feckless conduct of the war itself. U.S. diplomatic and military tactics exacerbated an existing humanitarian problem and then dragged the NATO alliance into a bombing campaign that succeeded only at the eleventh hour, and for reasons no one yet fully understands. That fecklessness led willy-nilly to an acceleration of the European Union's desire to build foreign policies and military forces separate from those of NATO (read: those of the United States), an impulse that if sufficiently mismanaged in future could doom the Atlantic partnership itself.

When one sums its mixed consequences and close calls, the real costs and the uncertain future of it all, U.S. Balkans policy hardly suggests itself as a model for emulation. When a good thing happens—and Milosevic's fall does qualify—it is hard to resist the temptation to elevate its meaning beyond the evidence, particularly if one can plausibly take credit for it. But resist it we should; we are a long way from finished with this mess.

ONE SHOULD also resist exaggerating trouble. From Israel's point of view, Oslo was a calculated risk. Yitzhak Rabin, never known to be an impetuous man, was faced in 1993 with a choice between an untenable status quo and an uncertain leap into the future. To succeed, that leap rested on the possibility that enough trust might develop between self-interested Israeli and Palestinian leaderships to move away from positions of mutual negation.

It was a risk Rabin took not because he knew it would succeed, but because he knew it did not *have* to fail. Moreover, even if complete success proved elusive, Rabin believed that Israel would still be better off so long as it made no critical and unrecoverable security concessions. Israel could off-load responsibility for controlling a hostile population, improve its regional and international position, and enhance its own morale and unity in the knowledge that if the process failed the fault would not lay with Israel. That is

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why he believed that not to try would be worse than failure.

Did Rabin believe that a stable final status agreement was *probable*, however? Not likely, and if necessary he was ready to impose a "separation", its unilateralism derived from Moshe Dayan and its map from Yigal Alon. But Rabin knew that Israel could not impose separation without some degree of international and especially American acquiescence, and that required Israel to first demonstrate a maximal effort to reach contractual peace with the Palestinians.

In other words, from Israel's perspective the peace process was a calculated exercise in moral realism. It was not a utopian delusion, a case of unilateral withdrawal, a sign of Israel's loss of nerve, or a manifestation of post-Zionist political masochism, as various and sundry detractors now claim. Prime Minister Ehud Barak began his tenure in June 1999 with an attitude similar to that of Yitzhak Rabin, except that when Barak assumed office the utility of Oslo's interim logic had, in his view, come to an end. Three months or so would be enough to find out, he said, whether a stable final settlement was possible—for all the arguments were known and what remained was only the summoning of courage on both sides to make the tough decisions.

So what has happened? It took a little longer than three months, but we have found out. At Camp David in July, Barak went to and arguably beyond the threshold of Israeli tolerance in offering concessions to the Palestinians. Yasir Arafat failed not only to accept Barak's offer but even to engage it in negotiation. In the following weeks it became clear that Arafat prefers to steal a smaller prize that avoids a promise to end the conflict than to negotiate for a larger prize that requires it. He thus labored to establish the basis for unilaterally proclaiming an independent state, and when this effort fell short—when European, Russian, Chinese and even Arab support was not forthcoming—the chairman found himself cornered. So he resorted to violence in such a way as to regain the international sympathy he required. In other words, he needed "martyrs."

Arafat has employed this tactic many times to good effect, but this time he went too far. The scale of violence, its obviously premeditated nature, and the incessant official incitement goading it to and occasionally beyond control—all following the most generous Israeli negotiating offer politically possible—shocked even the most dovish Israelis.

The symbolic center of it all was the video footage of the murder and mutilation of two Israeli reserve soldiers in Ramallah. The crowd captured on film was happy; even young women in their scarves shouted in a frenzy of joy over the spilling of Jewish blood. To see this Palestinian mob was for Israelis the coda to Arafat's unwillingness to negotiate in good faith. Not only would the Palestinian leadership not negotiate peace on honorable if necessarily imperfect terms, but many Palestinians seem determined to wage a guerrilla war for independence. Having convinced themselves that Israel was forced from southern Lebanon by just a few thousand Hizballah fighters, they think that the Palestinian masses backed by more than 40,000 armed police can do the same in the West Bank, Gaza and east Jerusalem.

As most Israelis now see it, thanks either to the perfidy or the failure of the Palestinian leadership, every demonstration of Israel's desire for peace has been interpreted on the Palestinian "street" as evidence of Israeli weakness. Hence the escalation of Palestinian ambition with every Israeli invitation to normalcy, and hence the deterioration of the situation to the edge of protracted guerrilla warfare.

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Is this a fair appraisal of where things now stand? Yes, it is. Does it mean that Oslo was a mistake from the start? No, and anyone who claims now to have known for certain from that day on the White House lawn in September 1993 how the peace process would turn out—whether for good or ill—is not to be taken seriously. As Rabin knew, history is profoundly contingent. If Arafat had chosen real leadership, and if Israel had enforced Oslo's terms more stringently from the start to better shape that choice, things might have worked differently. As for the United States, it was not wrong to encourage the process; but it could not make peace happen if either of the parties demurred—and one has.

The key question, still, is whether Israel is better off having gone through the Oslo exercise. The answer is, I believe, yes. Israel did free itself from the debilities of ruling a hostile population. Oslo was a precondition for the peace treaty with Jordan, which is of enormous benefit to Israel. Through the peace process Israel deepened the separation of the interests of the Arab states from the Palestinian agenda, a long-sought Israeli goal that was demonstrated when the leaders of the major Arab states refused to tie their fates to Arafat's at the October Arab Summit in Cairo.

Most important, and as Rabin knew, it was necessary to go through Oslo, or something like it, in order to find out if a deal among politicians was possible. He knew that peace among peoples would have to follow. For the time being, at least, we know that a deal is not possible, let alone real peace. But the way we found out carries the benefit Rabin foresaw. The practical price Israel has paid for this knowledge has not been great. Israel can deal readily with the Palestinian areas by *force majeure*, and it now has the will to do so because, though stung by disappointment, Israelis are more united on basics than they have been in years. They know what has gone wrong, they know their own leadership is not to blame, and they know what they have to do to restore the credibility of Israeli deterrence.

As it happens, at least one other government—that of the United States—shares Israel's basic view of recent events. Alas, it's lonely at the top. As for the rest of the world, most Jews, whether Israeli citizens or not, entertain few expectations. The last few weeks have also shown that the capacity of the "Seventy Nations"—the rabbinic shorthand for the gentile world—to discount the rights and lives of Jews has yet to find its limit. This is not a conclusion to which one jumps, but approaches only with great reluctance. □

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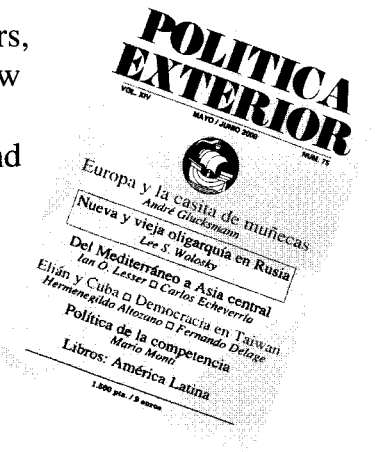
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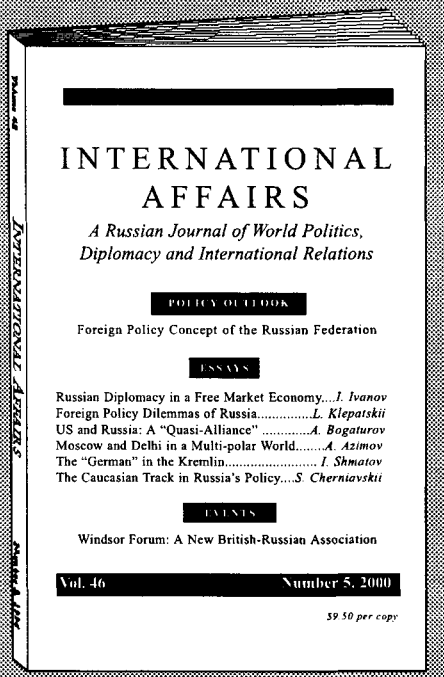
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